MORE Dykes To Watch Out For

To all the brave, gorgeous, undeceived lesbians in the world, for providing a rich and endless source of comic material. Particularly Alissa.







OH NO! IT'S...
INTERNALIZED HOMO-PHOBIA!
©1986 BY ALISON BECHDEL
IT'S SAD BUT TRUE! NO MATTER HOW WELL-ADJUSTED YOU ARE, EVERY NOW AND THEN THAT NAGGING LITTLE VOICE POPS UP!
ESTELLE! IT'S SO HARD BEING DIFFERENT! IS IT WORTH ALL THOSE STARES IN THE LADIES' ROOM? JUST A LITTLE MASCARA, PLEASE?!
ESTELLE! YOU LIKE BEING A DYKE! C'MON! ISN'T IT TIME FOR ANOTHER HAIRCUT?
OF COURSE, YOUR LESBIAN IDENTITY ALWAYS WINS,... BUT WHAT A WASTE OF ENERGY!
...RETURN TO MORALITY AND OLD-FASHIONED BLAHBLAHBLAH...
LISTEN TO THE NICE PRESIDENT, ESTELLE! LIFE COULD BE SO SIMPLE!
SIMPLE?! THE ONLY THING SIMPLE IS THAT REACTIONARY ZOMBIE'S MIND, ESTELLE!
ONE METHOD OF QUIETING THE HOMOPHOBIC VOICE IS BY DIRECT CONFRONTATION.
ESTELLE! WHAT WOULD YOUR MOTHER THINK?!
AW, GO MASTURBATE WITH YER MICROWAVE, YA PRISSY, PRE-PROGRAMMED POLLYANNA!
TO SILENCE IT PERMANENTLY REQUIRES CONSTANT VIGILANCE,...
DON'T HOLD HANDS! DO YOU WANT TO GET US HARASSED?!
GO ON! TAKE HER HAND! LET'S SHOW THESE POOR ROBOTS WHAT A COUPLA HAPPY LESBIANS LOOK LIKE!
... STEADFASTNESS AGAINST TEMPTATION,...
I WISH YOU'D GET A CAREER AND A CREDIT CARD! THIS MARGINAL EXISTENCE IS SO STRESSFUL!
LISTEN, ESTELLE! WE MIGHT NOT HAVE A VCR, BUT AT LEAST WE HAVE OUR FREEDOM!
... AND MAYBE THERAPY.
A LITTLE 'TOTAL WOMAN' WITH A PITCHFORK?

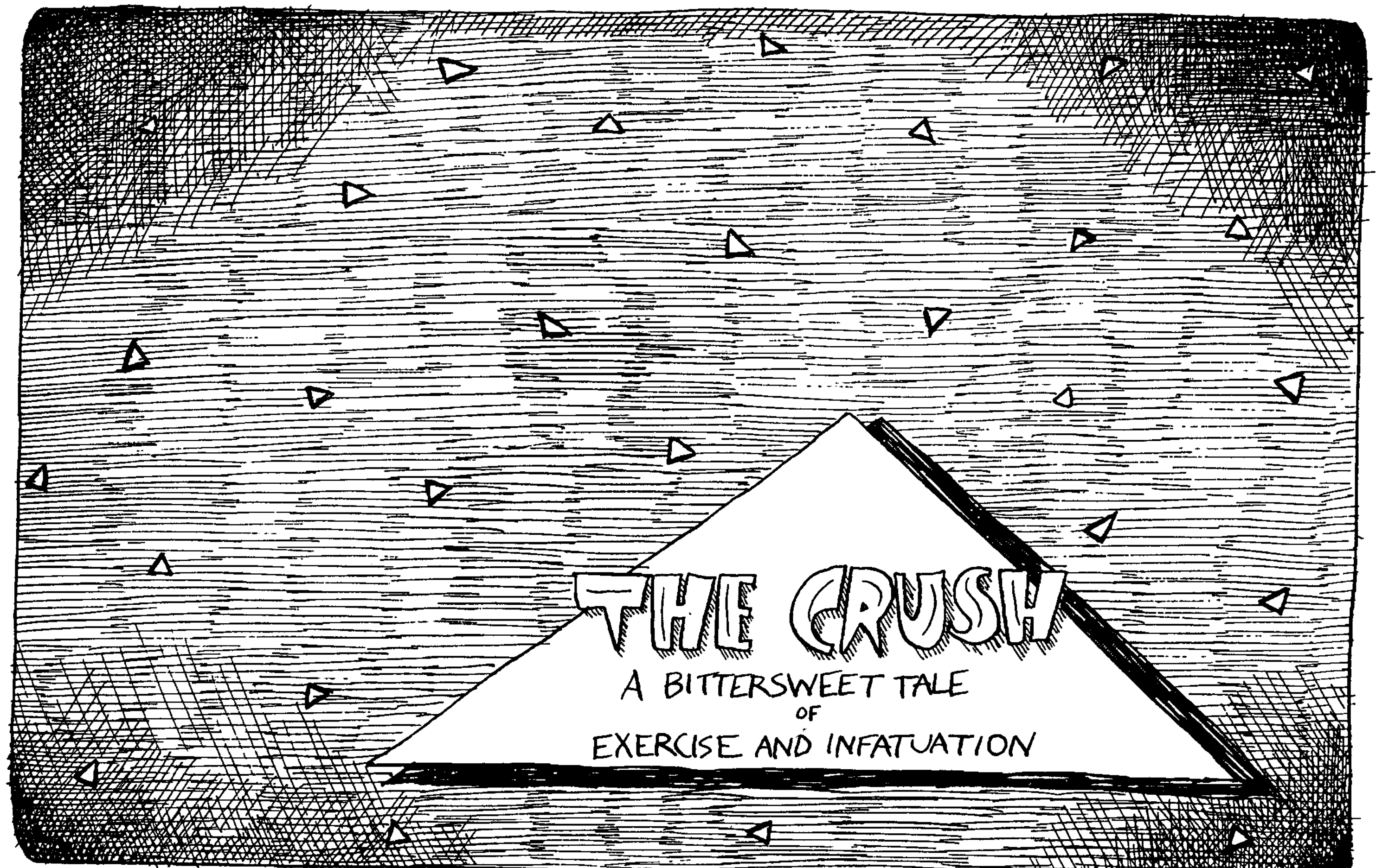


Butch & FEMME
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CURIOUS LITTLE TERMS, AREN'T THEY? SOME WOMEN ARE DISDAINFUL OF THEM.
OOH, YUCK. ROLE-PLAYING! WE'RE ABOVE ALL THAT!
SOME WOMEN HAVE MADE THEM INTO A SCIENCE.
NO, NO... JANET IS DEFINITELY YOUR TYPICAL BUTCHY FEMME.
FACE IT. NO MATTER HOW POLITICALLY CORRECT YOU ARE, THERE ARE ALL THESE ROLES LURKING ABOUT, JUST WAITING TO ENSNARE THE UNSUSPECTING VICTIM.
IT'S CALLED A SKIRT. I FIND IT COMFORTABLE. OKAY?
UGH... COULD YOU TRY THIS?
WHY SURE, DARLING.
MAYBE YOU TRY TO FIGHT THEM.
THIS IS WHY I NEVER SIT IN YOUR LAP.
MAYBE YOU SORT OF GET INTO THEM.
OOH, YOU'RE SO STRONG!
BUT THE TRUE GLORY OF THE LESBIAN EXPERIENCE IS REVEALED BY OUR THRILLING AND EXTRAORDINARY VERSATILITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR MOTHER NEVER TAUGHT YOU THIS.
EEEK! DON'T LET IT GET ON MY BEERCAN COLLECTION!


Cold Turkey
©1986 BY ALISON BECHDEL
THIS YEAR, IN OPPOSITION TO MY WASP HERITAGE, I'M REFUSING TO TAKE PART IN OPPRESSIVE HOLIDAYS.
THANKSGIVING IS JUST A HYPOCRITICAL WHITEWASHING OF THE GENOCIDE OF AMERICAN INDIANS.
CHRISTMAS IS A CAPITALIST CONSPIRACY OF CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION,...
...CRAMMED DOWN OUR COLLECTIVE THROAT, REGARDLESS OF OUR INDIVIDUAL RELIGIONS!
YOU SAID ALL THIS LAST YEAR, JULIA! BUT WHERE WERE YOU ON THANKSGIVING? OVEREATING IN FRONT OF A TELEVISION SET!
AND THE NEXT DAY, YOU WERE OUT CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WITH A VENGEANCE!
NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST PROPERTY.
WELL, SO... OLD HABITS DIE HARD. BUT THIS YEAR, I REALLY MEAN IT.
ERA
NO CRANBERRY SAUCE?
NO. OR PUMPKIN PIE, EITHER.
NO GIFTS? NO STOCKINGS? NO COLORED LIGHTS?
NO CARDS, NO CAROLS, NO CANDY!
NO TREE?
WE-ELL,... ISN'T THE TREE KIND OF A PAGAN SOLSTICE HOLDOVER?
JULIA...
I THINK A SMALL TREE WOULD BE OKAY... WITH MAYBE JUST A HINT OF TINSEL..


Silly Putty Syndrome
THE WORKSHOP SERIES
©1986 BY ALISON BECHDEL
THIS MONTH'S WORKSHOP IS LED BY CLEO BALDSHEIN, M.S.W., KNOWN FOR HER PIONEERING TECHNIQUES IN THE FIELD OF GUERILLA THERAPY.
ARE YOU IN THE PROCESS OF A PROLONGED AND AGONIZING BREAK-UP WITH YOUR LOVER? THIS MONTH WE WILL SHARE SOME OF OUR ISSUES AROUND TERMINATION.
DYKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
FIRST OF ALL, I WANT YOU TO VISUALIZE A LUMP OF SILLY PUTTY. SEE IT? NOW,
YOU WANT TO BREAK IT INTO TWO PIECES...
"...YOU BEGIN TO PULL IT SLOWLY APART, BUT IT WON'T BREAK! IT JUST STRETCHES THINNER AND THINNER INTO A LONG, STICKY THREAD."
SOUND FAMILIAR? HAVE YOU BEEN BREAKING UP WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND FOR SO LONG YOU'RE BEGINNING TO FEEL THIN AND STICKY?
DON'T BE EMBARRASSED! IT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR SOME LESBIANS TO SPEND MORE TIME BREAKING UP THAN THEY WERE INVOLVED IN THE FIRST PLACE!
BUT LUCKY FOR YOU, I CAN CURE THIS. TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR BREAK-UP. HAVE YOU FALLEN PREY TO THE NARCISSISTIC FALLACY?
I CAN'T LEAVE HER! SHE WOULD BE DEVASTATED!
THESE TWO ARE GOING NOWHERE FAST!
OR ARE YOU IN THE THROES OF THE HAMSTER REFLEX?!
HOW CAN WE BREAK UP? WE FIT SO WELL TOGETHER!
ABYSS
NOTHINGNESS
HEAVY PLATONIC INTIMACY IS JUST A DISPLACED FEAR OF THE VOID!
THERE'S JUST NO EXCUSE FOR WALLOWING IN YOUR MISERY THIS WAY. IT'S QUITE SIMPLE TO SPEED THIS TEDIOUS PROCESS ALONG. CLOSE YOUR EYES AGAIN, AND VISUALIZE THAT SAME LUMP OF SILLY PUTTY. GRIP IT FIRMLY IN BOTH HANDS, AND GIVE IT A GOOD, BRISK YANK. VOILÀ! A CLEAN
BREAK! NOW, DIDN'T THAT FEEL GOOD? I HOPE YOU'RE ALL ABLE TO APPLY WHAT WE'VE SHARED TODAY TO YOUR PERSONAL TERMINATION SITUATIONS. YOU'RE WELCOME!
STAY TUNED FOR FUTURE WORKSHOPS WHERE CLEO WILL APPLY HER GUERILLA THERAPY TECHNIQUES TO MORE TIRESOME, PERSONAL PROBLEMS LIKE YOUR ISSUES AROUND ABANDONMENT & COMING OUT TO YOUR PARENTS!


IS SHE... OR ISN'T SHE?
©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL
THE NEW PROOFREADER AT WORK... THAT HOT NUMBER AT THE GYM... THE WOMAN YOU KEEP RUNNING INTO IN THE THERAPIST'S WAITING ROOM..
PSYCHOLOGY TODAY
HOW DO YOU TELL IF SHE'S... YOU KNOW... THAT WAY?!
FIRST, SCAN HER CAREFULLY FOR ANY OBVIOUS SIGNS.
HM. WALLETS RIGHT... BUT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THOSE FINGERNAILS.
☐ LABYRIS JEWELRY
☐ TATTOOS OF WOMEN'S NAMES
☑ WALLET IN HIP POCKET
IF NO PHYSICAL CLUES ARE EVIDENT, NEXT YOU MUST SCRUTINIZE HER BEHAVIOR.
YEAH. THE DIAPHRAGM'S INCONVENIENT BUT I KEPT FORGETTING TO TAKE THE PILL. YA CAN'T WIN. WHAT DO YOU USE, SARAH?
MY GOODNESS! A RARE SPOTTED, MALAYSIAN MANGO MOTH! AND AT THIS TIME OF YEAR!
DOES SHE MAKE TAMPON JOKES? GET CALLS ONLY FROM WOMEN? CHANGE THE SUBJECT WHEN CONVERSATIONS GET TOUCHY?
IF THE ANSWER TO ANY OF THESE IS YES, CHANCES ARE SHE'S... ONE OF US. BUT NONE OF THIS EVIDENCE IS CONCLUSIVE. FOR PROOF, YOU MUST PROCEED TO THE NEXT STEP; JUDICIOUS BUT LEADING REMARKS.
THAT'S A LOVELY LAVENDER SWEATSHIRT... LAVENDER'S MY FAVORITE COLOR, IT'S SO... SO FESTIVE AND GAY!
-WINK
-WINK
NUDGE
FINALLY, IF NONE OF THESE METHODS ARE GETTING YOU ANYWHERE, TRY ASKING HER, ALREADY!
ARE YOU A LESBIAN?
OF COURSE. AREN'T YOU?

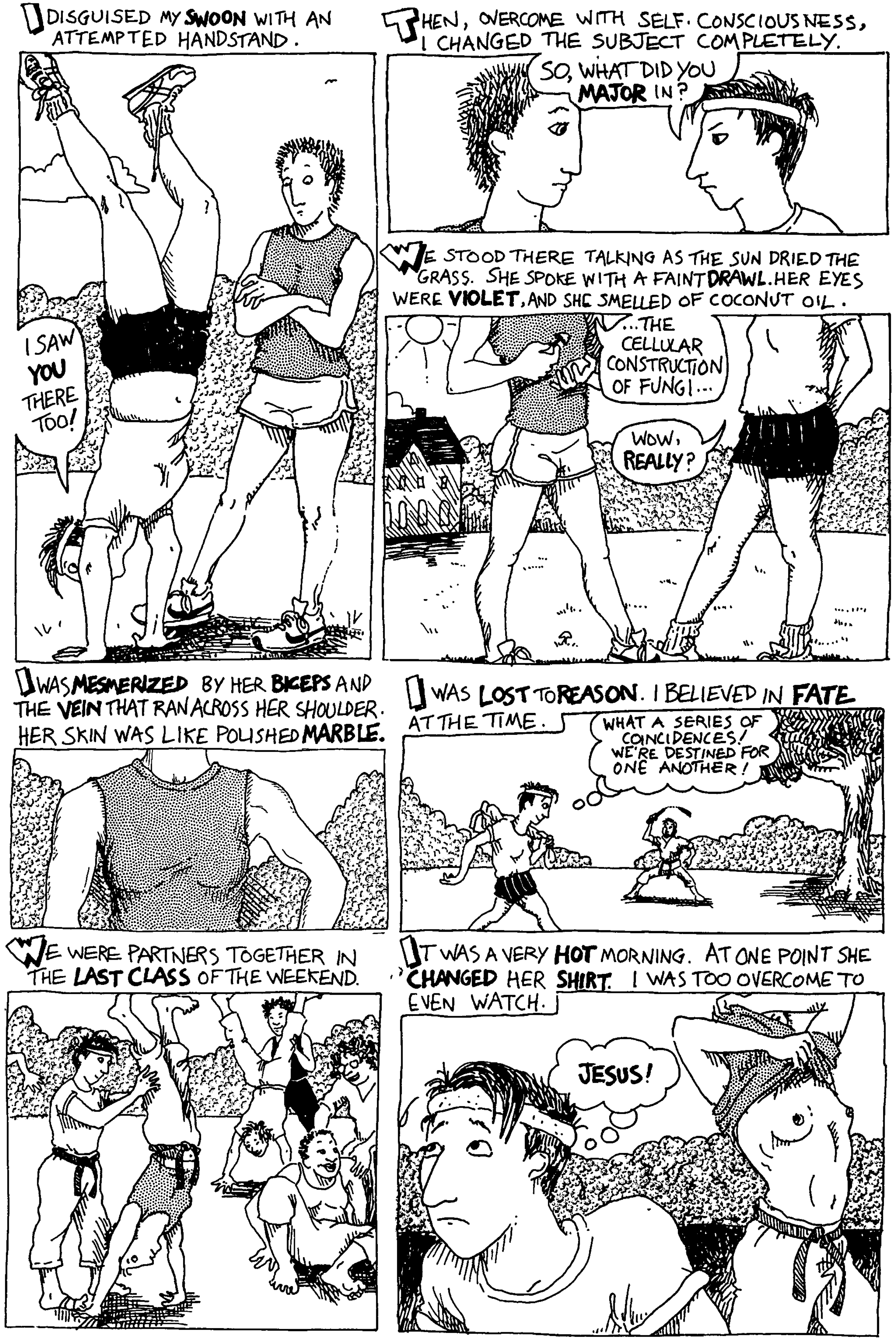

THE CRUSH
A BITTERSWEET TALE
OF
EXERCISE AND INFATUATION


The Crush
IN RETROSPECT, I WAS RIPE FOR IT. IT WAS SPRING AND I HADN'T HAD A DATE, LET ALONE SEX, IN MONTHS. I WAS TOO BUSY SUBLIMATING.
WOMEN'S DOJO
ICHI! NI! MORE FOCUS!
FIVE KARATE CLASSES A WEEK TOOK A LOT OUT OF ME. ANY EXTRA ENERGY I HAD WAS SPENT KEEPING MY UNIFORM LAUNDERED.
IN FACT, I HAD ALL BUT FORGOTTEN THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN I SPOTTED AT THE GAY PRIDE MARCH THE YEAR BEFORE...
PRIDE
IT WAS UNUSUAL FOR ME TO BE SO COMPLETELY STRUCK BY A STRANGER... BUT SOMETHING ABOUT HER MOVED ME.
GAY
NOW, HOWEVER, IT WAS A YEAR LATER, AND I WAS SUBLIMATING HARD.
THIRTY-ONE! THIRTY-TWO!
I WAS COUNTING THE DAYS UNTIL THE ANNUAL WOMEN'S MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING CAMP IN JUNE.
28
29
30

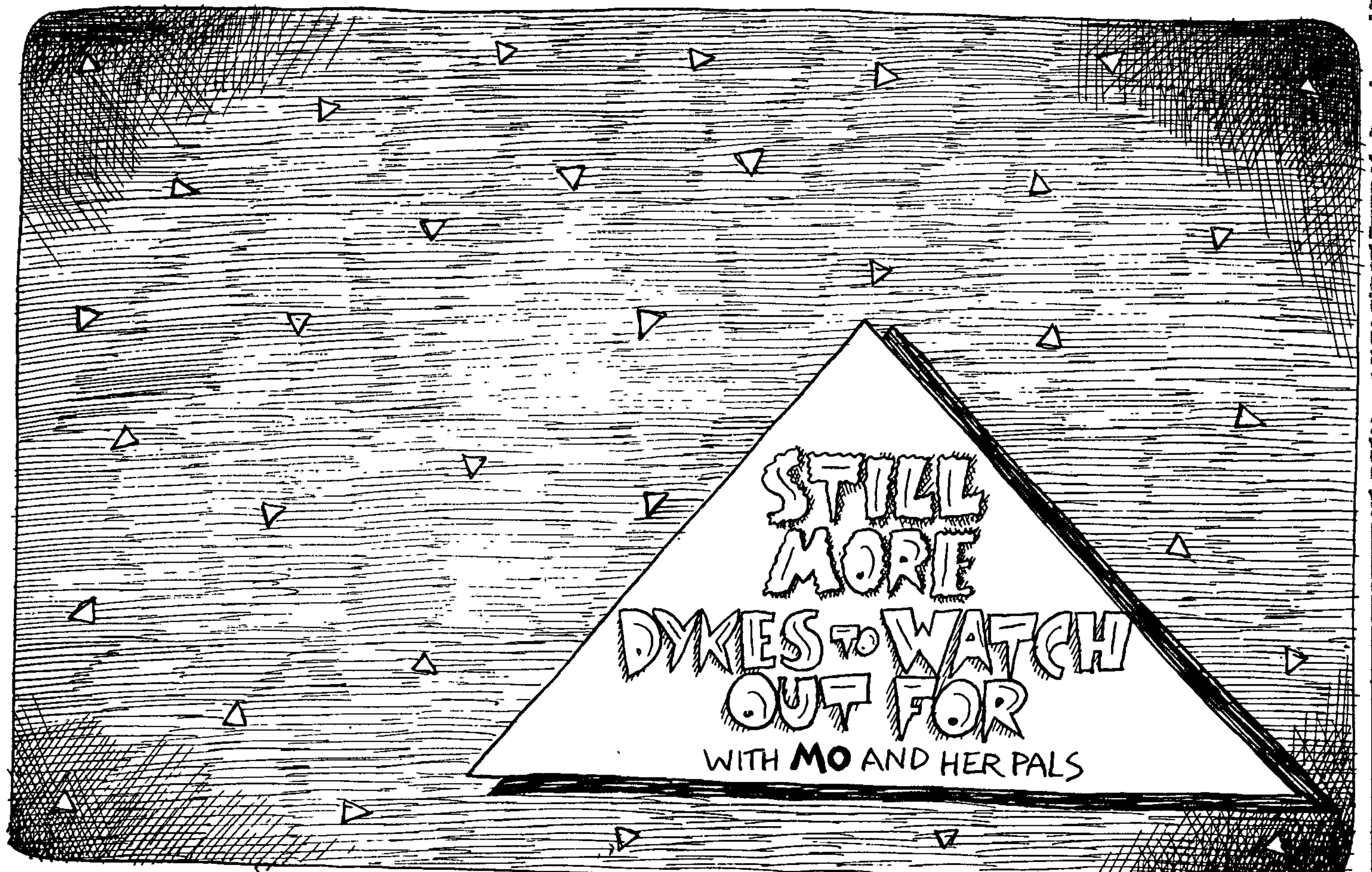

IT WAS A GREAT EVENT. HUNDREDS OF AMAZONS GATHERED FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, AND EVEN FROM EUROPE, TO STUDY AND TRAIN TOGETHER FOR FOUR GLORIOUS DAYS. I WENT WITH MY TEACHER AND SOME WOMEN FROM MY SCHOOL.
DAMN!
AND THEN, I SAW HER! I DON'T HAVE A VERY GOOD MEMORY FOR FACES, BUT I KNEW IT WAS HER, THE WOMAN FROM THE MARCH!! I STARTED TO FEEL WEAK. ALL THOSE MONTHS OF PUSH-UPS AND SIT-UPS, AND NOW I HAD SUDDENLY TURNED TO JELLY!
WOMEN'S LOCKERS
A-G
REGISTRATION
THE FIRST EVENING, ALL 400 OF US HAD A CLASS TOGETHER IN THE GYM. I POSITIONED MYSELF NEAR HER, BUT NOT TOO NEAR...
ICHI! NI! MORE FOCUS!
HOME VISITORS
I WAS IN TORMENT. I KNEW I HAD TO TALK TO HER, BUT I WAS STRANGELY PARALYZED BY THE PROSPECT.
GULP!
I DIDN'T SLEEP WELL THAT NIGHT.
Z.


THE NEXT AFTERNOON, WE WERE IN A CLASS TOGETHER OUTSIDE. I SURPRISED MYSELF.
NEED A PARTNER?
HEY, UM... UH... DO YOU WANNA BE PARTNERS?
PARTNERS?
YUP.
TO MY HORROR AND DELIGHT, SHE AGREED. SHE TOSSED HER DAMP GI TOP OFF ON THE GRASS BEFORE WE BEGAN.
OMIGOD... THOSE SHOULDERS!
HOT OUT, HUH?
THE INSTRUCTOR TOLD US TO DELIVER SLOW MOTION ATTACKS TO SPECIFIC TARGETS ON OUR PARTNERS, MAKING GENTLE BUT FIRM CONTACT.
THE FIRST TIME I TOUCHED HER WAS A SLOW BLOW TO HER SWEATY JAW.
POF
HER STOMACH WAS LIKE A ROCK THROUGH HER DAMP T-SHIRT.
AFTER THE CLASS, SHE ASKED FOR A DRINK FROM MY WATER BOTTLE.
WE TALKED ON OUR WAY BACK TO THE GYM. SHE TOLD ME SHE JUST GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE. IVY LEAGUE. SHE ROWED CREW AND WAS GOING TO BE A DOCTOR.
WHAT A BLUEBLOOD.. JEEZ, I'M SUCH A BUM!
...I WAS GOING TO GO TO LAW SCHOOL, BUT I CHANGED MY MIND...
I WAS VERY IMPRESSIONABLE IN THOSE DAYS..
I WAS A GONER, BUT I TRIED TO BE COOL.
SEE YA
SOLAR PLEXUS ACHE
NORMALLY A VERY BIG EATER, I FOUND THAT I HAD COMPLETELY LOST MY APPETITE!
WHATSA MATTER WITH YOU?


I BEGAN TO ANNOY MY FRIENDS.
OH MY GOD! THERE SHE IS! ISN'T SHE MAGNIFICENT?
OK, OK! SHE'S CUTE ALREADY!
THE NEXT MORNING, I WAS OUT RUNNING AS THE SUN CAME UP. SHE FELL INTO STEP BESIDE ME.
HI!
OH! GOOD MORNING!
SHE WAS A BEAUTIFUL ATHLETE, AND TALKED EASILY AS WE RAN.
...PULLED HAMSTRINGS... SPRINTS.. MILE A DAY..
WE BREAKFASTED TOGETHER. I STILL WASN'T HUNGRY. WE TALKED ABOUT BEING MISTAKEN FOR BOYS.
CONVENIENT. SOMETIMES.
..EXCEPT WHEN THEY CALL YOU FAGGOT.
ON THE WAY BACK TO THE DORMS, I WAS FEELING MORE COMFORTABLE WITH HER...
SO, HOW OLD ARE YOU?
THEN A STRANGE THING HAPPENED...
22.
YEAH? ME TOO! WHAT MONTH WERE YOU BORN?
SEPTEMBER.
ME TOO! WHAT DAY?
THE TENTH.
NO! YOU'RE KIDDING! THAT'S MY BIRTHDAY!
NO SHIT!
WE REMARKED ON THE COINCIDENCE FOR A WHILE, AND THEN AN EVEN STRANGER THING HAPPENED!
I SAW YOU AT THE GAY PRIDE MARCH LAST YEAR.


I DISGUISED MY SWOON WITH AN ATTEMPTED HANDSTAND.
I SAW YOU THERE TOO!
THEN, OVERCOME WITH SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, I CHANGED THE SUBJECT COMPLETELY.
SO, WHAT DID YOU MAJOR IN?
WE STOOD THERE TALKING AS THE SUN DRIED THE GRASS. SHE SPOKE WITH A FAINT DRAWL. HER EYES WERE VIOLET, AND SHE SMELLED OF COCONUT OIL.
...THE CELLULAR CONSTRUCTION OF FUNGI...
WOW, REALLY?
I WAS MESMERIZED BY HER BICEPS AND THE VEIN THAT RAN ACROSS HER SHOULDER. HER SKIN WAS LIKE POLISHED MARBLE.
I WAS LOST TO REASON. I BELIEVED IN FATE AT THE TIME.
WHAT A SERIES OF COINCIDENCES! WE'RE DESTINED FOR ONE ANOTHER!
WE WERE PARTNERS TOGETHER IN THE LAST CLASS OF THE WEEKEND.
IT WAS A VERY HOT MORNING. AT ONE POINT SHE CHANGED HER SHIRT. I WAS TOO OVERCOME TO EVEN WATCH.
JESUS!


WE WERE LEARNING THE BASICS OF A STRANGE, BRAZILIAN MARTIAL ART. I COULD SMELL HER COCONUT OIL. I WAS ECSTATIC.
BOM BIDDA BOM
AFTER THE CLASS, WE ALL GATHERED FOR A GROUP PHOTO.
I LOOKED FOR HER TO SAY GOODBYE, BUT SHE HAD DISAPPEARED.
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!
CIAO!
THERE WAS NO SIGN OF HER ANYWHERE. CRUSHED, I REALIZED I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HER LAST NAME! I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE. THE DRIVE BACK TO THE CITY WAS EXCRUCIATING.
16
20
I DIDN'T WASH MY DIRTY GI FOR DAYS. IT SMELLED LIKE GRASS AND FRESH AIR AND SWEAT...
June
SNIFF
AND POSSIBLY, VERY FAINTLY, OF COCONUT OIL.


STILL MORE
DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR
WITH MO AND HER PALS


One Enchanted Evening
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I'M TIRED OF BEING CELIBATE, LO! I HAVEN'T HAD SEX IN... 8 MONTHS!
"CELIBATE ?!" YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE IT WAS A CONSCIOUS CHOICE. ADMIT IT, MO. THE OPPORTUNITY JUST HASN'T ARISEN.
OKAY, OKAY! I ADMIT IT. BUT IT'S SO HARD TO MEET WOMEN, AND BESIDES, I HAVE SUCH HIGH STANDARDS!
YEAH. RIGHT. SO WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE CUTE ACCOUNTANT?
SHE WASN'T POLITICAL ENOUGH. BESIDES, SHE WAS ALREADY INVOLVED.
WHAT ABOUT THE WOMAN IN YOUR KARATE CLASS YOU WERE SO HOT FOR?
SHE WASN'T INTELLECTUAL ENOUGH. BESIDES, SHE DOESN'T SLEEP WITH OTHER KARATE STUDENTS. MATTER OF POLICY.
RIGHT... WHAT ABOUT NAOMI FROM THE FOOD CO-OP?
ARE YOU CRAZY? I'M WAY TOO CRUSHED OUT! I CAN'T EVEN ASK HER WHERE THE BULGHUR IS WITHOUT HYPERVENTILATING! NO... THAT KIND OF THING NEVER WORKS.
WELL... WHAT ABOUT ME?
VERY FUNNY, LOIS. YOU KNOW WE COULD NEVER HAVE AN AFFAIR! I HAVE TO FEEL ROMANTIC ABOUT SOMEONE BEFORE I SLEEP WITH THEM!
I KNOW, I KNOW. MAKING OUT WITH ME WOULD JUST BE INDULGING YOUR BASE, LOWER NATURE, RIGHT?
WELL... YEAH. SORT OF...
THANKS, MO. I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT. LUCKY FOR ME, THOUGH, I DON'T BELIEVE IN "LOWER NATURE!"
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I HAVE A DATE FOR SOME HOT & HEAVY UNROMANCE WITH NAOMI! SHE WANTS TO TRY MY FAMOUS SEAWEED AVOCADO PATÉ! CIAO, BELLA!
RATZ! I NEVER HAVE ANY FUN!
IS MO A HOPELESSLY ROMANTIC IDEALIST, TRAPPED IN THE HARD-NOSED, FAST-PACED WHIRLWIND OF MODERN LESBIAN LIFE? OR IS SHE JUST A DRAG? STAY TOONED!


MO & LO in... the SLUMP
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MO'S LIFE HAS TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE. STILL WITHOUT A LOVER, SHE HAS ALSO LOST HER JOB AND BECOME THE VICTIM OF A REGRETTABLE HAIRCUT!
AT LEAST IT'S WINTER. I CAN KEEP THIS HAT ON TILL MY HAIR GROWS BACK.
UNEMPLOY
A RESOURCEFUL WOMAN, SHE DOES NOT GIVE IN TO DESPAIR, BUT KEEPS HERSELF BUSY.
BUT WHEN NO MAIL ARRIVES, EXCEPT FOR A REJECTION LETTER FROM A PROMINENT LESBIAN-FEMINIST LITERARY JOURNAL... EVEN OUR HEROINE'S RESILIENT NATURE IS TESTED!
SHRED!
SHE TURNS TO HER FAITHFUL FRIEND LOIS FOR SUPPORT.
I'M SO DEPRESSED! HOW'M I EVER GOING TO GET A JOB LET ALONE A GIRLFRIEND, WITH THIS HAIRCUT?! I LOOK LIKE A TRANSSEXUAL MARINE!
MO, RELAX! YOU'RE GETTING ALL WORKED UP.
OF COURSE I'M GETTING WORKED UP! I'M ANXIOUS AND TENSE BECAUSE I HAVEN'T HAD SEX IN TEN MONTHS!
I'M GONNA SUE THAT BARBER! MALPRACTICE! MENTAL CRUELTY! IRREPARABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL DAMAGE!
SKRITCH
SKRITCH
MO, YOUR HAIR WILL GROW BACK IN A FEW WEEKS!
THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY. WHAT AM I GONNA DO TILL THEN? LO, WHAT'S THAT WEIRD NOISE?
UH... IT'S NAOMI... WE'RE HAVING BREAKFAST.
OH, THAT'S JUST GREAT! YOU KNOW, I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE CAN LIE AROUND MAKING LOVE WHEN THERE'S SO MUCH MISERY AND DESOLATION IN THE WORLD!
MO, LIFE IS A CYCLE OF UPS AND DOWNS. THINGS WILL GET BETTER!
THAT'S REAL PROFOUND, LOIS. THANKS A LOT. I HAVE TO GO WATCH OPRAH WINFREY NOW. AT LEAST SHE HAS SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD COMPASSION!
WILL HER FRIENDSHIP WITH LO SURVIVE MO'S HARD TIMES? IS LIFE A CYCLE OF UPS AND DOWNS,..OR DOES MO JUST HAVE BAD KARMA? AND THE CRUCIAL QUESTION: IS SHE A DRAG, OR WHAT?!


HIGH ANXIETY
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ONE NIGHT AFTER KARATE CLASS...
DON'T YOU SEE THE IRONY OF YOUR SITUATION, MO? YOU MIGHT BE MISERABLE NOT HAVING A JOB...
BUT WHAT'S THAT COMPARED WITH THE MISERY OF HAVING ONE? WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER FOR DINNER TONIGHT? I TOLD TONI YOU WOULD.
SURE, CLARICE.
HI ANTONIA.
WELL, IF IT AIN'T THE KARATE KIDS!
STILL JOB HUNTING, MO?
GROAN
RIGHT.
SHE'S KINDA ANXIOUS & DEPRESSED. LET'S TRY AND CHEER HER UP!
OVER THE LENTIL STEW...
GEE, MO... SINCE YOU'RE COLLECTING UNEMPLOYMENT, WHY DON'T YOU JUST TAKE TIME OUT TO DO SOMETHING YOU REALLY LIKE?! ENJOY YOUR FREEDOM!
YOU'RE RIGHT! GODDESS KNOWS HOW MUCH LONGER IT'LL LAST! DOESN'T THE INCREASING CONSERVATISM IN THIS COUNTRY WORRY YOU?
IT MAKES ME FEEL KIND OF SCHIZOPHRENIC... HERE WE ARE, GOING ABOUT OUR LITTLE COUNTER-CULTURE LIVES, RIGHT?
BUT OUT THERE IN THE REAL WORLD THEY'RE BOMBING ABORTION CLINICS... HOLDING NAZI AND KKK RALLIES... TRYING TO QUARANTINE PEOPLE WHO MIGHT HAVE AIDS!
THEY'RE MAKING SECRET WEAPONS DEALS TO ILLEGALLY FUND SO-CALLED "FREEDOM FIGHTERS" AND CALLING IT "THE LORD'S WORK!!"
WE'RE LIVING IN A PROTESTANT POLICE STATE AND ALL I'M WORRIED ABOUT IS GETTING A JOB SO I CAN HELP PERPETUATE THE PARANOID PATRIARCHAL DEATH CULTURE!
YOU TWO ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT! THANKS FOR THE LENTILS! I HAVE TO GO HOME NOW AND RETHINK MY PRIORITIES!
SLAM!
GREAT! NOW I'M ANXIOUS & DEPRESSED!
IF I WEREN'T SO PRINCIPLED, I'D SAY IT'S HIGH TIME SHE GOT HERSELF A GIRLFRIEND!


MO & CLARICE IN...
THE HOAX
©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL
MO HAS DECIDED TO POSTPONE HER JOB SEARCH AND TAKE TIME TO RE-THINK HER PRIORITIES.
ON HER WAY TO A LUNCH DATE WITH HER EX-LOVER, CLARICE...
JADED... I'VE BECOME SO JADED. WHERE DID ALL MY REVOLUTIONARY FERVOR GO?
SCUFF
SCUFF
4
I REMEMBER WHEN CLARICE AND I CAME OUT TOGETHER IN COLLEGE... WE WERE SO EXCITED, SO RADICAL, SO COMMITTED TO DISMANTLING THE PATRIARCHY! CLARICE STILL IS... BUT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE, I STOPPED FIGHTING...
BARBER SHOP
OPEN
HEY, MO! SO HOW'S THE PRIORITY CHECK GOING?
PAINFULLY. HOW'S LAW SCHOOL?
SAME OLD SHIT. STUDYING MY ASS OFF.
CLARICE, I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH I ADMIRE YOU, PATIENTLY PLAYING THE BOYS' GAMES BY THE BOYS' RULES, WORKING FOR CHANGE INSIDE THE SYSTEM... SLOWLY GAINING THE POWER TO REALLY SHAKE THINGS UP! ATTACK FROM WITHIN... THE OLE' TROJAN HORSE PLOY...
Y'KNOW, MO, I'M REALLY GETTING INTO MY CORPORATE TAX CLASS LATELY!
LISTEN... IF I WENT INTO CORPORATE LAW, I COULD MAKE $70,000 MY FIRST YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL...
WHAT?
CAFE TOPAZ
UH... JUST TO PAY BACK YOUR LOANS, RIGHT? THEN, AFTER A YEAR YOU'LL GO WORK FOR LEGAL AID, RIGHT?
WELL, I DUNNO... TONI AND I ARE THINKING OF BUYING A HOUSE AND HAVING KIDS... YOU NEED MONEY FOR THAT.
CLARICE! OLD COMRADE! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
GODDESS KNOWS, US WOMEN OF COLOR HAVE A HARD ENOUGH TIME IN THIS COUNTRY... WHY SHOULDN'T I ENJOY THE FRUITS OF MY LABORS? GET A MICROWAVE, A VOLVO STATION WAGON...
CLARICE! I DIDN'T THINK IT COULD HAPPEN! YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE! MY LAST HOPE!
...PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR THE KIDS,... QUIET EVENINGS WITH TONI, PORING OVER OUR STOCK PORTFOLIO...
CLARICE! SNAP OUT OF IT! JESUS, WHERE ARE THOSE DEPROGRAMMERS WHEN YOU NEED ONE?!
MO, RELAX! I'M JUST PULLING YOUR LEG!
CLARICE THE UNSWERVING! THE ORIGINAL RADICAL LESBIAN FEMINIST TERRORIST! WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR POOR WIMPS LIKE ME IF EVEN YOU HAVE KNUCKLED UNDER?!
MO, I SAID I WAS KIDDING! LIGHTEN UP!
I MAY AS WELL SEE IF THE C.I.A. IS HIRING!
UH... WHY DON'T I COME BACK LATER?
GOOD IDEA.
CAFÉ TOPAZ


IT'S MO AGAIN! AND SHE'S HAVING...
NO SEX
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LIFE PLODS ON FOR OUR AMOROUS HEROINE.
...HER EYES DARK WITH DESIRE, MONIQUE LICKED THE MELTED PAPAYA ICE CREAM FROM URSULA'S FINGERS. "I WANT YOU," WHISPERED URSULA HOARSELY, USING HER FREE HAND TO FUMBLE WITH THE ZIPPERS OF MONIQUE'S BLACK LEATHER FLIGHTSUIT...
VANILLA LEATHER LOVE
SIGH.
5
THE NEXT MORNING FINDS MO AT HER FAVORITE LESBO HANGOUT, CAFE TOPAZ...
...ALMOST A YEAR SINCE MY LAST SEXUAL ENCOUNTER, AND STILL NO SIGN OF MS. RIGHT...
MY PENT-UP EROTIC ENERGY IS DRIVING ME CRAZY... I'M ATTRACTED TO EVERY DYKE I SEE... THEY'RE ALL SO... SO SEXY...
THE WAY THEY LAUGH...
THE WAY THEY WALK...
THE WAY THEIR JEANS FIT...
HERE COMES A HAPPY COUPLE... LOOKS LIKE THEY JUST ROLLED OUT OF BED... THEY WERE PROBABLY MAKING LOVE ALL NIGHT LONG.
I STILL DON'T SEE WHY WE HAVE TO GO TO A THERAPIST -- A COMPLETE STRANGER -- TO DISCUSS OUR PRIVATE PROBLEMS!
BECAUSE WE'RE NOT GETTING ANYWHERE ON OUR OWN! WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME WE MADE LOVE?!
WILL YOU STOP PRESSURING ME ABOUT SEX?
PRESSURING YOU? IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK THAT WE MAKE LOVE EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE? YOU USED TO ENJOY IT!
I DO ENJOY IT! JUST NOT ALL THE TIME!
ALL THE TIME?! AT THIS POINT I'M GRATEFUL FOR ALTERNATE BANK HOLIDAYS!!
RADAR EAR
WILL YOU PLEASE KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN?!
HERE'S YER PANCAKES! ANYTHING ELSE?
CAN I PLEASE LICK THE MAPLE SYRUP FROM YOUR FINGERS?
UH... NO, THANKS.



the GOY
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YEAH, NAOMI AND I HAVE BEEN MESSING AROUND A LITTLE, BUT IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS... OH, BY THE WAY, SHE'S HAVING A SEDER FOR PASSOVER ON MONDAY... SHE TOLD ME TO INVITE YOU.
ME? LOIS, I CAN'T GO TO NAOMI'S SEDER! I STILL HAVE A CRUSH ON HER... AND BESIDES, I'M NOT JEWISH!
AW, C'MON, MO! CLARICE AND TONI WILL BE THERE! YOU WON'T BE THE ONLY GOY!
GOY? WHAT'S A GOY?
ANYONE WHO WOULD ASK THAT QUESTION IS A GOY, OK? SEE YOU MONDAY!
ON MONDAY, MO GETS A RIDE WITH CLARICE & TONI.
SO, LIKE, HAVE YOU GUYS EVER BEEN TO ONE OF THESE THINGS? WHAT IF I DO SOMETHING DUMB?
MO, RELAX. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME!
SHALOM, NAOMI!
CLARICE! TONI! SHALOM! COME ON IN! PUT YOUR FOOD ON THE TABLE...
HI, MO! WHADJA BRING?
UH... HI, NAOMI... I... UH... I BROUGHT SOME, UH... RYE BREAD. WITH SEEDS.
OH, MO, THAT'S SWEET! BUT WE ONLY EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD DURING PASSOVER!
OH.
DON'T WORRY! THERE'S PLENTY OF MATZAH! COME ON, EVERYBODY! LET'S SIT DOWN!
SHIT!
FOR ALL OF YOU WHO'VE NEVER BEEN TO A SEDER, LET ME EXPLAIN A LITTLE. PASSOVER IS A WONDERFUL TRADITION. TONIGHT WE CELEBRATE THE LIBERATION OF THE JEWS FROM SLAVERY IN EGYPT. THIS IS A RITUAL ABOUT OPPRESSION, AND RESISTANCE, AND FREEDOM, AND...
...SPRINGTIME, AND LIFE!
SMAK
CLAP CLAP
AWRIGHT! LIGHT THE CANDLES!
AND THE CEREMONY BEGINS...
MO GETS TO READ THE FOUR QUESTIONS.
WHY ON THIS NIGHT DO WE EAT MATZAH INSTEAD OF BREAD?
A LESBIAN HAGGADAH
AND BY THE END OF THE EVENING, SHE'S ACTUALLY ENJOYING HERSELF!
PHARAOH'S ARMY GOT DROWN-DED! OH, MARY DONTCHA WEEP!
THAT WAS GREAT! I HAD A REALLY GOOD TIME! AND I ONLY DID ONE DUMB THING!
NOT BAD, FOR A GOY!
TOYOTA
ABOLISH APARTHEID
CO-OP WE OWN IT
U.S. OUT OF NICARAGUA
627-DYK
I ♥ ♀'s ♪



IT'S CLARICE & TONI! AND THEY'RE...
GETTING RESPECTABLE
©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL
ON THE PHONE WITH MO ONE MORNING...
...BLAH, BLAH... WHINE... NO GIRLFRIEND... NO SEX... WHINE... BLAH, BLAH...
I KNOW, MO. BUT IT'S SPRING! THINGS WILL START HAPPENING AGAIN!
BYE, DARLING!
GRAPE GRAVEL
I GUESS SO... SO HOW ARE YOU AND TONI?
JUST GREAT! YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER BEEN SO HAPPY! IN FACT...
THAT'S NICE. WELL, I HAVE TO GO READ THE PERSONALS NOW. THANKS FOR LISTENING, CLARICE!
ON CAMPUS THAT DAY...
IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOU, CLARICE! IT'S BEEN MONTHS! SO, ARE YOU & TONI STILL TOGETHER?
UH... LAST I HEARD, WE WERE.
LATER IN THE AFTERNOON...
...MY OTHER GIRLFRIEND ANGELA IS KIND OF UPTIGHT ABOUT ME SEEING NAOMI. ANGELA'S A REAL LINEAR THINKER. SHE CAN'T SEEM TO TRANSCEND THE MONOGAMOUS MINDSET.
GEE, LO. THAT'S ROUGH.
FINALLY, BACK AT THE RANCH...
JUNE! I'M HO-OME!
IN HERE, WARD!
TONI, AM I STILL YOUR ONE AND ONLY?
I THINK SO. WHY?
I WAS AFRAID MAYBE SINCE THIS MORNING YOU DECIDED THAT MONOGAMY WAS TOO LINEAR, AND SO YOU TRANSCENDED IT.
WELL.. IT IS KIND OF UNCOOL... BUT I THINK YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME.
WHY IS IT SO UNCOOL? WE DON'T GET ANY CREDIT, TONI! WHEN I RUN INTO SOMEONE I HAVEN'T SEEN IN A WHILE, IT'S ALWAYS "SO, ARE YOU TWO STILL TOGETHER?" LIKE THEY EXPECT US TO BREAK UP!
AND NO ONE WANTS TO HEAR ABOUT HOW HAPPY I AM WITH YOU. THEY'RE ONLY INTERESTED IN ROMANTIC STRIFE!
SO, NOW WE NEED A SUPPORT GROUP FOR HAPPY COUPLES?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN! I DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING FROM THE STRAIGHT WORLD, BUT YOU'D THINK AT LEAST OTHER DYKES WOULD VALIDATE OUR RELATIONSHIP!
WELL... STRAIGHT COUPLES GET RESPECT WHEN THEY MARRY. MAYBE WE NEED TO MAKE SOME KIND OF SYMBOLIC AFFIRMATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO ONE ANOTHER!
YOU MEAN...
YES! LET'S OPEN A JOINT CHECKING ACCOUNT!
OH, DARLING! BUT THIS IS SO SUDDEN!

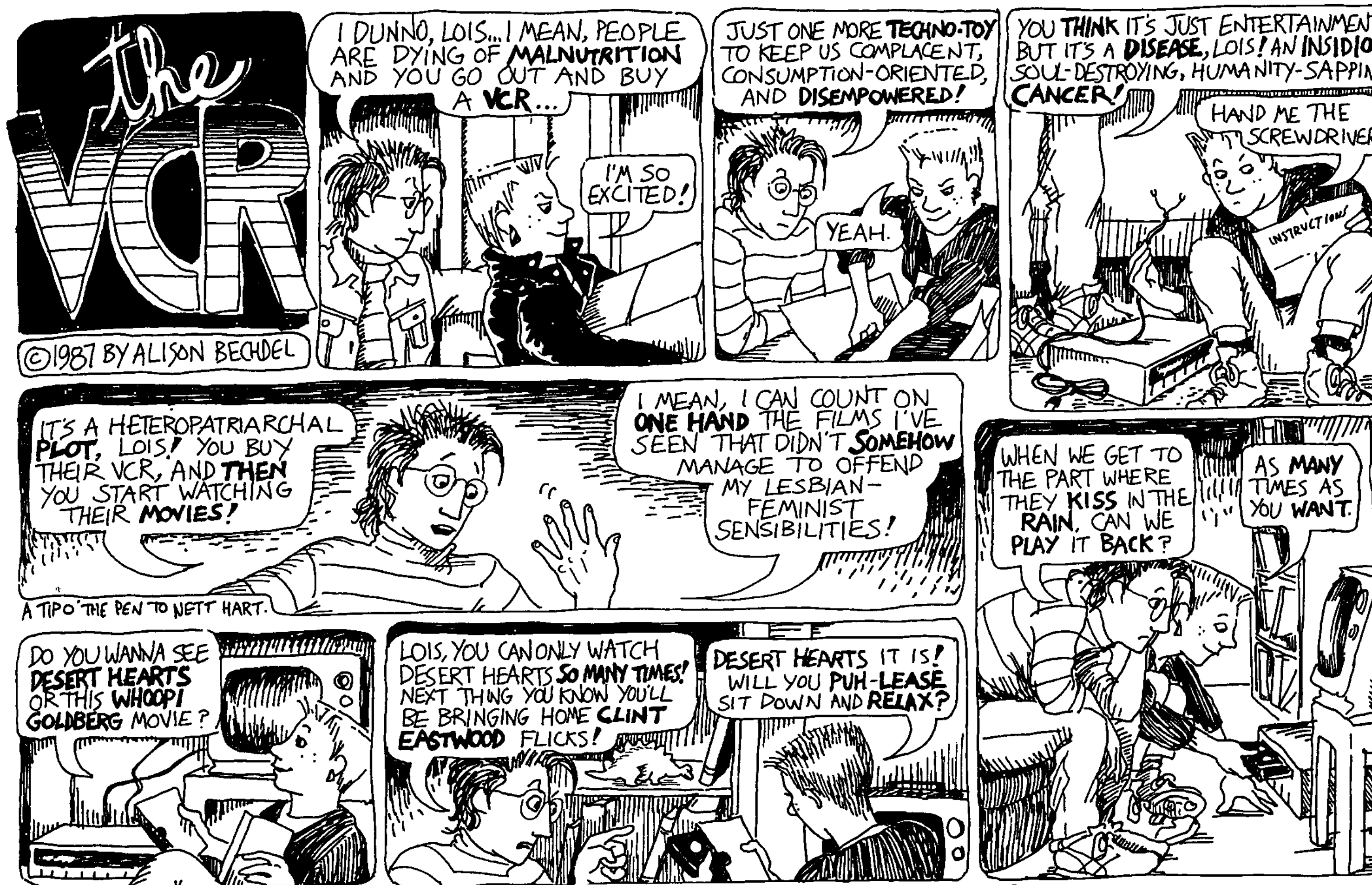


ANGST IN RIGHT FIELD
8
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IT'S SOFTBALL SEASON AGAIN, AND MO'S HAVING A TOUCH OF WELTSCHMERZ IN THE LAST INNING...
IT'S SO PEACEFUL OUT HERE...
YOU'D NEVER SUSPECT THAT SOMEWHERE POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE BEING TORTURED, PEOPLE ARE STARVING, CHEMICALS ARE SPILLING, MISSILES ARE PILING UP... NOPE! HERE IN THE HEART OF THE BEAST, EVERYTHING'S JUST HUNKY DORY!
SOUTH AFRICA, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARE ALL FAR AWAY. WE CAN WATCH THEM SAFELY ON THE NEWS EVERY NIGHT...
AND WHEN SOMETHING GETS TOO CLOSE TO HOME, THE NETWORKS FIND WAYS TO KEEP IT PALATABLE AND UNINFORMATIVE...
LIKE CALLING OLIVER NORTH AND HIS HENCHMEN 'KEY PLAYERS' IN THE IRAN-CONTRA DEAL, INSTEAD OF SOMETHING LESS POSITIVE LIKE 'CRIMINALLY INSANE HYPERMILITARY @*#☆! WARMONGERS!'
SMEK!
'KEY PLAYERS!' HMPH! MAKES 'EM SOUND LIKE GODDAMN FOOTBALL HEROES! LIES! CORRUPTION! HYPOCRISY!
AND PEOPLE SWALLOW IT! WELL, WHAT DO I EXPECT FROM A NATION THAT EQUATES TRUTH AND BEAUTY WITH HALLMARK CARDS? A NATION OF MINDLESS CONSUMERS GOBBLING UP NATURAL RESOURCES AND LEAVING ALL THIS SHIT BEHIND!
I MEAN, THE GLOBAL CLIMATE IS CHANGING BECAUSE WE'VE FUCKED UP THE ENVIRONMENT SO BAD!
KIK
I WONDER WHICH WILL COME FIRST, THE NEXT ICE AGE OR NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST?
HOW CAN WE STAND HERE PLAYING SOFTBALL? I MEAN, WHAT'S THE POINT ?!?
FLOP!
THAT'S THE GAME! WE WON!
WHAT A CATCH, MO!
FOR A POINTLESS GAME, IT HAS ITS MOMENTS.
IS SHE FINALLY LOSING IT?



RESUME OF THE DAMNED
9
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THANKS FOR COMING OVER, LOIS! MY UNEMPLOYMENT RUNS OUT IN A COUPLE WEEKS AND I GOTTA GET MY RESUMÉ TOGETHER.
NO PROBLEM, MO OLD PAL! I'M GOOD AT THIS KIND OF THING!
END APARTHEID
DIVEST NOW
OKAY. LET'S START WITH YOUR LAST JOB.
PROOFREADER AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANT FOR THE NOW-DEFUNCT GAYLY FORWARD NEWS.
..AND BEFORE THAT?
OFFICE ASSISTANT AT THE ABORTION RIGHTS ACTION COUNCIL.
UH...OKAY. AND BEFORE THAT?
DELIVERY-PERSON FOR THE COMMON WOMON (THAT'S WITH AN 'O') BREAD COLLECTIVE.
HM...THIS ISN'T SOUNDING TOO PROMISING..HOW ABOUT VOLUNTEER WORK?
WELL, I HAVE GOOD EDITING SKILLS FROM MY TWO YEARS ON THE STAFF OF THE LESBIAN RAG...
I GOT EXPERIENCE DOING COUNSELING WHEN I VOLUNTEERED AT THE BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER...
AND I HAVE FACILITATING AND ORGANIZING SKILLS FROM PLANNING DEMONSTRATIONS WITH THE CLARA LEMLICH MEMORIAL AFFINITY GROUP AND GRAFFITI GUERRILLAS!
MO, MO, MO... HAVEN'T YOU DONE ANYTHING LESS, UH... LESS PROGRESSIVE?
WHADDAYA MEAN?
I MEAN, WHO'S GONNA HIRE YOU WITH A RESUMÉ LIKE THIS? C'MON MO, THINK! YOU MUST HAVE DONE SOME WORK WHICH HAD LITTLE OR NO SOCIALLY REDEEMING VALUE!
WELL JEEZ, LOIS! I'M NOT TRYING TO GET A JOB WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT!
OKAY, FINE! BE DOWNWARDLY MOBILE! GET ANOTHER LOW-PAYING JOB IN SOME IDEALISTIC, GOODY-TWO-SHOES ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATION! SEE IF I CARE!
BY THE WAY, WE NEED ANOTHER CASHIER AT THE WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE. $5 AN HOUR, NO BENEFITS. WHY DON'T YOU COME BY DURING MY SHIFT TOMORROW AND APPLY?
WHAT A PAL!


A LESSON in GRAVITY
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AS WE WAIT TO HEAR WHETHER MO HAS BEEN HIRED AS A CASHIER AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO ANOTHER OF HER MANY PROBLEMS!
10
WE FIND MO & CLARICE LIMBERING UP BEFORE KARATE CLASS...
MY SUPPLE YOUNG BODY IS SLOWLY WASTING AWAY FROM LACK OF USE, CLARICE! WHAT AM I GONNA DO? I NEED A LOVE INTEREST!
MO, YOU'RE TRYING TOO HARD! PEOPLE PICK THAT UP AND IT SCARES THEM OFF!
WHY? I'M A NICE CATCH! SHY BUT PASSIONATE, POLITICALLY AWARE, SKILLED IN SELF-DEFENSE!
NAH... THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. WOMEN WILL RUN AWAY FROM THE MOST SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS, MOST EMOTIONALLY TOGETHER, MOST HOT-LOOKING DYKE IN THE WORLD IF THEY SENSE SHE'S LOOKING FOR A LOVER!
I WOULDN'T! WHERE IS SHE?
YES, YOU WOULD. IT'S A LAW OF GRAVITY. THE MORE DESPERATE YOU ARE, THE MORE YOU REPEL WOMEN!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, CLARICE? REMEMBER OUR SOPHOMORE YEAR IN COLLEGE? WE WERE SO DESPERATE FOR EACH OTHER WE FLUNKED EVERYTHING EXCEPT OUR WOMEN'S STUDIES CLASS!
OH, MO... THAT WAS DIFFERENT. IT WAS ALL NEW TO US THEN. YOU'RE MORE EXPERIENCED NOW. AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FIND A LOVER UNTIL YOU GET TO THE POINT WHERE YOU REALLY AREN'T LOOKING FOR ONE.
BUT I NEED TO HAVE SEX! SOON! I'M TIRED OF CREATIVE MASTURBATION!
TIRED OF IT! I'LL BET YOU HAVEN'T TRIED IT WITH JELLO YET!
I HAVE TOO. YOU TOLD ME THAT ONE MONTHS AGO.
MO, LISTEN. I KNOW YOU'RE HAVING A ROUGH TIME, BUT IT'S HARD BEING SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGING WHEN ALL YOU DO IS WHINE!
WHINE? ME? CLARICE, I DON'T WHINE... DO I?
IS MO GOING TOO FAR? IS SHE STARTING TO REPEL HER FRIENDS AS WELL AS POTENTIAL LOVERS? WILL SHE GET HER ACT TOGETHER? BEAR WITH HER A LITTLE LONGER, AND MAYBE YOU'LL FIND OUT!


the VCR
©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL
I DUNNO, LOIS... I MEAN, PEOPLE ARE DYING OF MALNUTRITION AND YOU GO OUT AND BUY A VCR...
I'M SO EXCITED!
JUST ONE MORE TECHNO-TOY TO KEEP US COMPLACENT, CONSUMPTION-ORIENTED, AND DISEMPOWERED!
YEAH.
YOU THINK IT'S JUST ENTERTAINMENT. BUT IT'S A DISEASE, LOIS! AN INSIDIOUS, SOUL-DESTROYING, HUMANITY-SAPPING CANCER!
HAND ME THE SCREWDRIVER.
INSTRUCTIONS
IT'S A HETEROPATRIARCHAL PLOT, LOIS! YOU BUY THEIR VCR, AND THEN YOU START WATCHING THEIR MOVIES!
I MEAN, I CAN COUNT ON ONE HAND THE FILMS I'VE SEEN THAT DIDN'T SOMEHOW MANAGE TO OFFEND MY LESBIAN-FEMINIST SENSIBILITIES!
A TIP O' THE PEN TO NETT HART.
DO YOU WANNA SEE DESERT HEARTS OR THIS WHOOPI GOLDBERG MOVIE?
LOIS, YOU CAN ONLY WATCH DESERT HEARTS SO MANY TIMES! NEXT THING YOU KNOW YOU'LL BE BRINGING HOME CLINT EASTWOOD FLICKS!
DESERT HEARTS IT IS! WILL YOU PUH-LEASE SIT DOWN AND RELAX?
WHEN WE GET TO THE PART WHERE THEY KISS IN THE RAIN, CAN WE PLAY IT BACK?
AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WANT.


THE CONCERT
© 1988 BY ALISON BECHDEL
MO HAS ACCOMPANIED CLARICE AND TONI TO A PERFORMANCE BY A NATIONALLY KNOWN WOMEN'S MUSICIAN AND HER BAND....
ARE THESE WOMEN DYKES, OR WHAT?
I GUESS SO... I DUNNO!
SHHH!
DURING INTERMISSION...
THE AUDIENCE IS FILLED WITH DYKES! HOW COME THIS BAND WON'T SAY THE 'L' WORD?
MO, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? THEY'RE ANTI-APARTHEID,.. THEY'RE ANTI-NUCLEAR,.. THEY'RE FEMINIST... THEY'RE ON OUR SIDE!
NO THEY'RE NOT! IF THEY ARE DYKES, IT'S NOT VERY SUPPORTIVE OF THEM NOT TO COME OUT, IS IT? AND IF THEY'RE NOT DYKES, THEN WHO DO THEY THINK THEY ARE, TAKING ALL OUR HARD-EARNED LESBIAN DOLLARS FOR THESE WISHY-WASHY AMBIGUOUS-GENDER LOVE SONGS?!
JEEZ, MO... YOU'RE SO HARD CORE! CAN'T YOU JUST RELAX AND ENJOY THE MUSIC?
NO! THESE SEATS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE, AND I CAN'T SEE AROUND THIS BASKETBALL STAR HERE!
I SWEAR THIS IS IT, CLARICE... I'VE BEEN VERY PATIENT BUT I HAVE MY LIMITS!
I SHOULDA GONE TO THE WHITNEY HOUSTON CONCERT WITH LOIS.
REMEMBER, DARLING.... YOU'RE A PACIFIST!


PRIDE & PREJUDICE
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WHAT A GREAT DAY FOR A MARCH! LOOK...THERE'S MO!
Pride 87
11
HEY, MO! HAPPY GAY PRIDE! I WANT YOU TO MEET MY FRIEND HARRIET FROM THE CENTRAL AMERICAN TASK FORCE!
HEY, CLARICE, TONI! HI, HARRIET.
NICE TO MEET YOU, MO! WE WERE JUST AGREEING THAT GAY PRIDE DAY IS OUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY OF THE YEAR.
YEAH? MINE TOO! BUT DON'T YOU THINK THE WHOLE THING IS GETTING KIND OF CONSERVATIVE?
DON'T YOU SEE THE INFLUENCE OF REAGAN AND AIDS? THIS COUNTRY IS IN POLITICAL RETROGRADE AND GAY PRIDE IS GOING ALONG WITH IT!
FIGHT AIDS NOT GAYS
UH-OH... HERE SHE GOES...
LOOK AT THIS MARCH! WE'VE STOPPED SAYING "WE'RE QUEER AND HAPPY THAT WAY, SO YOU'D BETTER GET USED TO IT.."
GAY & LESBIAN CATHOLIC MARTYRS ...SOON TO BE SAINTS!
NOW IT'S MORE LIKE, "SEE, WE'RE JUST AS PATRIOTIC, GOD-FEARING, AND RED-BLOODED AS THE REST OF YOU WHOLESOME AMERICANS."
I'M A YANKEE DOODLE DAN-DY... A YAN-KEE DOODLE, DO OR DIE!
MEN'S CHORU
RELIGION! PATRIOTISM! FINANCIAL SECURITY! DOESN'T ANYONE REALIZE?! WE'RE CONSPIRING IN OUR OWN OPPRESSION! WHERE HAS OUR OLD SPIRIT AND OUTRAGEOUSNESS GONE?!
LE$BIAN INVESTMENT BANKERS
MO, THERE'S PLENTY OF SPIRIT AND OUTRAGEOUSNESS HERE! WILL YOU LIGHTEN UP AND TAKE A LOOK AROUND? YOU GET SO WORKED UP, YOU ONLY SEE THE THINGS THAT SUPPORT YOUR DEPRESSING THEORIES!
FUCK GENDER
JEEZ! MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT! MAYBE I OTTA JUST WANDER OFF INTO THE CROWD AND STOP RUINING THE MARCH FOR YOU GUYS!
IS SHE ALWAYS LIKE THIS?
YOU GET USED TO IT.


SATURDAY NIGHT —PART I—
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AT LONG LAST, OUR HEROINE HAS REJOINED THE RANKS OF THE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED.
IT'S SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND SHE'S JUST FINISHING HER FIRST WEEK OF CASHIERING AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS.
12
ONE BUMPER STICKER, ONE SMALL CRYSTAL, ONE COPY ON OUR BACKS, ONE PACKAGE INCENSE...THAT'LL BE $12.49.
PHEW! QUITTIN' TIME!
G'NIGHT, JEZANNA! SEE YOU MONDAY!
GOOD WEEKEND, MO!
MO IS IN A PARTICULARLY GOOD MOOD BECAUSE TONIGHT IS THE FIRST BIG SOCIAL EVENT IN WEEKS... THE BENEFIT DANCE FOR THE LESBIAN HEALTH COLLECTIVE!
OH, I WANNA DANCE WITH SOME-BODY... WANNA FEEL THE HEAT WITH SOMEBODY!
OPEN
AFTER A QUICK SUPPER...
TAKEOUT LEFTOVERS
DOWN, VANESSA! EAT YER FRISKIES.
MO BEGINS HER GROOMING RITUAL WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION.
ISN'T IT EXCITING, GIRLS? A HOT SATURDAY NIGHT IN JULY... ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN!
A LITTLE STYLING GEL FOR THAT WINDBLOWN LOOK!
A LITTLE TRIM!
AND NOW... WHAT TO WEAR? SHORTS? NAH.. TOO PLAYFUL... JEANS? CAN'T GO WRONG WITH JEANS..
EVERLAST
TOO BUTCH.
TOO P.C.
Womyn's Herstory Project
TOO MIAMI.
TOO MUCH.
FINALLY, SHE'S DRESSED... A DISCREET EARRING... AND A DROP OF SANDALWOOD OIL TO ACCENTUATE MY AURA OF MYSTIQUE!
...AND ON HER WAY.
...WITH SOMEBODY WHO LOVES ME...
SPORTS
BUT HORRORS! IN HER EAGERNESS, MO HAS ARRIVED RIGHT ON TIME!!
NO ONE'S HERE YET?!?
NOPE... YOU'RE THE FIRST! THE D.J.'S STILL SETTIN' UP. THAT'LL BE 7 BUCKS!
STAY TUNED TO DISCOVER THE OUTCOME OF THIS MOST AWKWARD PREDICAMENT!!


SATURDAY NIGHT
—PART 2—
©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL
HAVING ARRIVED AT THE BIG DANCE UNFASHIONABLY EARLY, OUR HEROINE IS ENDEAVORING TO REMAIN CALM.
JUST BE COOL... PRETEND YOU LIKE BEING THE FIRST ONE TO ARRIVE AT A DANCE!
TESTING... TESTING...
13
EVENTUALLY, THINGS BEGIN TO PICK UP. MO POUNCES ON THE FIRST FAMILIAR FACE SHE SEES.
SISTERS... ARE DOIN' IT FOR THEMSELVES!
HARRIET!
HI, I'M CLARICE'S FRIEND MO! I MET YOU AT THE PRIDE MARCH!
YEAH. I KNOW. NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
SUDDENLY NERVOUS, MO FINDS HERSELF STRANGELY UNABLE TO MAKE LIGHT, FRIENDLY CHIT-CHAT!
SO, HOW ABOUT THESE IRAN/CONTRA HEARINGS?
YEAH... INCREDIBLE, HUH?
COVERT OPERATIONS! FALSE DOCUMENTS! "PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY!" I'VE NEVER HEARD SO MANY REVERSALS IN MY LIFE! DECEPTION IS A VIRTUE! LAWBREAKERS ARE PATRIOTS! C.I.A.-BACKED MERCENARIES ARE FREEDOM-FIGHTERS!
WHAT CHOO WANT... BABY I GOT!
WHAT CHOO NEED... YOU KNOW I GOT IT!
PEOPLE ARE SWALLOWING OLIVER NORTH'S LIES AND PROPAGANDA! SUCH DELUSIONS AND DOUBLETALK! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR VALUES?!
WHOA! LISTEN, MO. YOU'RE REALLY CUTE WHEN YOU START RAVING WITH INDIGNATION, BUT IF YOU KEEP TAKING THE 6 O'CLOCK NEWS PERSONALLY, YOU'RE GONNA GIVE YOURSELF AN ULCER!
CUTE?! SHE THINKS I'M CUTE!
IF YOU DON'T LIKE WHAT'S GOING ON, GO OUT AND ORGANIZE! DEMONSTRATE! REFUSE TO PAY YOUR TAXES! DON'T SIT AROUND WHINING!
OMIGOD! IS SHE FLIRTING?!
SO, YOU WANNA DANCE?
UH... SURE!
THEY DANCE A FEW SONGS, THEN GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS... BUT BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OUT, THEY MEET AGAIN.
I WAS REALLY INTERESTED IN OUR CONVERSATION EARLIER... UH... MAYBE WE COULD CONTINUE IT SOMETIME?
YEAH, I'D LIKE THAT A LOT! GIVE ME A CALL... HERE'S MY NUMBER.
ON THE BUS HOME, OUR HEROINE IS STRANGELY ELATED...
CUTE, HUH?


LET'S JOIN CLARICE & TONI AS THEY SPEND SOME...
"QUALITY TIME"
TOGETHER!
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14
IT'S WEDNESDAY MORNING...
UGH! NOT AGAIN! DIDN'T WE JUST WAKE UP YESTERDAY?
BEEP BEEPBEEP! BEEPBEEPBEEP!
ZNK.
CAN YOU DRIVE ME TO SCHOOL? I HAVE SOME LAST MINUTE WORK TO DO BEFORE MY TORTS EXAM.
OKAY, BUT HURRY UP. I'VE GOT TO DROP THE TRUCK OFF WITH THE MECHANIC ON MY WAY TO WORK. THE MUFFLER'S SHOT.
SKRITCH SKRITCH
CAN I BORROW SOME UNDERWEAR?
THIS IS MY LAST PAIR! I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO DO THE LAUNDRY YESTERDAY!
DAMMIT! NO MILK! I HATE EATING DRY CEREAL!
HAVE YOU PAID THE PHONE BILL? WE GOT A FINAL NOTICE YESTERDAY.
DISCONNECTION
THE TOAST!
¡AY!
OH, NO!
WHAT?
WE FORGOT OUR ANNIVERSARY AGAIN! MONDAY WAS OUR FIFTH!
CRUNCH CRUNCH
TORTS
SCRAPE SCRAPE
WELL, LET'S CELEBRATE TONIGHT, THEN.
I CAN'T. THE WOMEN OF COLOR ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT IS MEETING AT 8.
OH, WELL. I SHOULD GO TO KARATE CLASS ANYWAY, AND MO WANTS TO HAVE DINNER WITH ME. HOW ABOUT TOMORROW NIGHT?
I HAVE THERAPY TOMORROW NIGHT.
THERAPY? I THOUGHT YOU WERE FINISHED WITH THERAPY!
FINISHING. I'M IN THE PROCESS OF FINISHING. DON'T YOU LISTEN TO ME ANY MORE?
HOW COULD I LISTEN TO YOU? WE HAVEN'T HAD TIME FOR A CONVERSATION IN WEEKS!
HELL! IT'S LATER THAN I THOUGHT! THE ALARM CLOCK MUST BE SLOW AGAIN! I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DROP YOU OFF.
HAPPY ANNIVERSARY! BYE!
SAME TO YOU. BRING HOME SOME MILK.


RISKY Business
- part one -
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15
MO HAS JUST RUSHED OVER TO LOIS'S HOUSE TO WELCOME HER BACK FROM THE MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL!
IT WAS WILD, MO! IT POURED RAIN THE WHOLE FIVE DAYS! I HAD SUCH A GREAT TIME!
IT SOUNDS MISERABLE.
IT WAS SO PRIMAL! ESPECIALLY THE MUD WRESTLING! I FELT SO CLOSE TO THE EARTH!
MUD WHAT?
WRESTLING! YOU KNOW... PLAYING AND SLIDING IN THE MUD WITH A BUNCH OF NAKED WOMEN!
OH. RIGHT.
THAT'S WHERE I MET KATHLEEN! SHE ALMOST GOT ME IN A HAMMER LOCK, BUT I WAS TOO SLIPPERY FOR HER!
WE RACED TO THE SHOWERS, THEN WENT TO HER TENT AND HAD PASSIONATE SEX AS IT STARTED TO POUR AGAIN!
LOIS, ARE YOU MAKING THIS UP?
THE NEXT MORNING I WENT TO A WORKSHOP ON "PARTHENOGENESIS WITH GEMSTONES", WHERE I MET AMETHYST. WHAT A FASCINATING WOMAN!
DIDJA GO TO HER TENT TOO?
NO, SHE CAME TO MINE. Y'KNOW, I THINK SHE FOUND MY G-SPOT!
LO-IS!
COME ON, MO. SPARE ME THE PURITAN ROUTINE.
LOIS, YOU CAN'T JUST GO AROUND BEDDING EVERY WOMAN YOU MEET! HAVEN'T YOU HEARD? THERE'S AN EPIDEMIC GOING ON!
AW, MO, RELAX! LESBIANS ARE A LOW-RISK GROUP! I'M NOT GONNA GET AIDS FROM SLEEPING AROUND WITH OTHER WOMEN!
LOIS! BEING A DYKE DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T GET AIDS! HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO ELSE ANEMONE OR ARTEMIS OR WHATEVER THE HELL HER NAME IS HAS SLEPT WITH?! YOU HAVE TO STOP HAVING SEX!!!
TO BE CONTINUED...
IS MO OVER-REACTING? IS LOIS UNDER-REACTING? THE DEBATE HEATS UP IN OUR NEXT EPISODE!
STAY TOONED!


RISKY Business
- part two -
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16
IN OUR LAST EPISODE, WE LEFT MO AND LOIS ON THE BRINK OF A DISPUTE REGARDING LOIS'S EROTIC EXPLOITS IN THE FACE OF AIDS!
STOP HAVING SEX?! WHAT'S WITH YOU, MO? HAVE YOU BECOME A FUNDAMENTALIST SINCE I LAST SAW YOU?!
LOIS, THE REASON LESBIANS ARE LOW-RISK IS BECAUSE, IN GENERAL, WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF CASUAL SEX. BUT YOU SEEM BENT ON SINGLE-HANDEDLY REVERSING THAT TRAIT!
THAT'S BULLSHIT! SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU BECOME AN EXPERT ON THE RATE OF CASUAL SEX IN THE LESBIAN COMMUNITY, SISTER CELIBATE?
LOIS'S HOUSEMATE GINGER STEPS INTO THE FRAY...
OOH! LOW BLOW, LOIS! BUT YOU ARE WRONG, MO. SLEEPING AROUND ISN'T WHAT CAUSES AIDS... IT'S A VIRUS.
PART OF THE REASON DYKES ARE LOW-RISK IS BECAUSE IT'S JUST HARDER TO TRANSMIT DISEASES SEXUALLY BETWEEN TWO WOMEN THAN WHEN THERE'S SPERM BEING ABSORBED.
THANK YOU, GINGER.
HARDER, I SAID. NOT IMPOSSIBLE. REMEMBER THE TIME YOU CAUGHT THE YEAST INFECTION FROM THAT WOMAN VISITING FOR THE WITCHCRAFT CONFERENCE, AND THEN YOU GAVE IT TO ANGELA?
YEAH! SO THERE, MS. DON JUANITA!
HUH! I FORGOT ABOUT THAT... JEEZ, MAYBE I SHOULD'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS STUFF WITH AMARYLLIS... ER,... AMETHYST... BEFORE WE SLEPT TOGETHER...
I GUESS WE ALL GOTTA START TALKING ABOUT IT.
YEAH, GREAT. I HAVE A HARD ENOUGH TIME ASKING FOR A DATE LET ALONE GRILLING SOMEONE ON HER SEXUAL HISTORY.
WELL, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, MO. IT GIVES YOU SOMETHING NEW TO WORRY ABOUT!


THE CALL
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17
THE BALL IS IN OUR HEROINE'S COURT! IT'S BEEN SEVERAL WEEKS SINCE THE DANCE WHERE HARRIET GAVE MO HER PHONE NUMBER... BUT MO IS STILL DELIBERATING OVER WHETHER TO FOLLOW THROUGH...
MO, JUST DO IT ALREADY!
BUT WHAT IF SHE'S IN THE BATHTUB?! WHAT IF, LIKE, HER PARAKEET JUST DIED OR SOMETHING? WHAT IF SHE'S EXPECTING A CALL FROM SOMEONE ELSE SHE GAVE HER NUMBER TO?
MO, WHAT IF RONALD REAGAN DECIDES IT'S TIME TO PUSH THE BUTTON AND WE'RE ALL REDUCED TO SUBATOMIC PARTICLES BEFORE DINNER'S READY?
JEEZ! I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT! I BETTER CALL RIGHT NOW!
I KNEW THAT WOULD GET HER.
YOU SLY DEVIL.
HI,... UH... HARRIET? THIS IS MO... I TALKED TO YOU AT THE DANCE FOR THE LESBIAN HEALTH COLLECTIVE...
MO! I'M GLAD YOU CALLED! WHAT'S UP?
WHAT'S UP? UH... I DUNNO.. I JUST THOUGHT I'D CALL AND, UH... Y'KNOW... SEE HOW YOU WERE... HOW ARE YOU?!
ACTUALLY, AT THE MOMENT I'M KIND OF FRUSTRATED. I HAD THIS RIDE LINED UP FOR THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON AND IT JUST FELL THROUGH.
YEAH? WELL.. GOSH, UH... Y'KNOW, YOU COULD RIDE WITH ME!
YEAH? DO YOU HAVE ROOM?
SURE! IT'S JUST ME, CLARICE, TONI AND LOIS IN LOIS'S OLD VW BUG! PLENTY OF ROOM!... OKAY!... SO I'LL CALL YOU WITH THE DETAILS IN A COUPLE DAYS... NOT AT ALL! NICE TALKING TO YOU TOO! BYE!
SO, SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE A DATE.
A DATE? WELL, I MEAN, ALL I DID WAS OFFER HER A RIDE. I HOPE SHE DOESN'T THINK I'M JUST LOOKING FOR A DATE! I MEAN, DIDJA THINK I WAS TOO HEAVYHANDED? DID I SOUND LIKE I JUST WANTED TO SLEEP WITH HER?
IT'S GONNA BE A LONG WAY TO D.C.


ON THE ROAD
18
EN ROUTE TO THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON, OUR STALWART BAND OF TRAVELERS PAUSES BRIEFLY IN THE HEARTLAND OF AMERICA...
UGH! THIS CHILI HAS MEAT IN IT!
WHADJA EXPECT AT HOJO'S? TEMPEH?
I HATE USING THE BATHROOMS IN THESE PLACES... THIS 5-YEAR OLD JUST ASKED HER MOTHER IF I WAS A BOY OR A GIRL!
SO? YOU SHOOK UP A LITTLE KID'S ASSUMPTIONS. IT WAS GOOD FOR HER!
YEAH. THINK OF YOURSELF AS A WALKING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE. YOU SHOULD TRY BEING THE FIRST BLACK PERSON ONE OF THESE CORN-FED KIDS HAS EVER SEEN!
I DUNNO. REST STOPS GIVE ME THE CREEPS.
THESE PEOPLE LOOK LIKE ESCAPEES FROM HERITAGE USA.
DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT THERE ARE TWO COWBOYS HEADED STRAIGHT FOR US!
HOWDY!
HI.
YOU ALL LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HEADED FOR D.C.!
YEAH? WHAT OF IT?
Daily News
COED STABS HOMOPHOBE AT HOJO'S!
WELL SO ARE WE! ALL THE WAY FROM IOWA! YOU HAVE A GOOD TRIP NOW, AND ENJOY THE MARCH!
BACK ON THE TRAIL...
HOO BOY! WAS MY FACE RED!
TALK ABOUT ASSUMPTIONS...
OUR HEROINE IS THANKFUL FOR THE CROWDED CONDITIONS!


Bringing it Home
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BACK FROM THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON, MO IS APOLOGIZING TO HER BOSS AT MADWIMMIN FOR MISSING WORK.
WELL, WE MANAGED TO SCRAPE BY WITHOUT YOU, MO. AFTER ALL, IT WAS FOR A GOOD CAUSE.
GOD, IT WAS INCREDIBLE, JEZ! HALF-A-MILLION OF US! WE TURNED THAT CREEPY, IMPERIALIST CAPITAL INTO A WHOLE DIFFERENT WORLD!
FOR ONE WEEKEND WE HAD A GLIMPSE OF REAL FREEDOM. IT WAS LIKE BEING 100% QUEER AND PROUD OF IT, BUT AT THE SAME TIME NOT BEING QUEER AT ALL ANYMORE... Y'KNOW?
YEAH, I DO KNOW. I WASN'T EVEN THERE BUT I CAN SURE FEEL THAT ENERGY!
MO! YOU'RE BACK!
HEY, LOIS! YEAH, I GOT HOME LAST NIGHT. SOME LESBERADO WITCHES WE WERE IN JAIL WITH GAVE US A RIDE IN THEIR WINNEBAGO!
JEZANNA, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE RECOGNIZED OUR UPTIGHT LITTLE MO! WE'RE ALL READY TO LEAVE AFTER THE MARCH, BUT SHE DECIDES TO STAY ON FOR THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE! NO RIDE HOME, NO BAIL MONEY, NO AFFINITY GROUP!
WELL, HARRIET AND I REALIZED DURING THE MARCH THAT WE REALLY HAD NO CHOICE... IT WAS JUST A NECESSARY THING TO DO.
HARRIET, EH? NO DOUBT THE SAME HARRIET WHOSE PHONE NUMBER YOU'VE BEEN FONDLING FOR WEEKS... SO, YOU GOT ARRESTED?
"YEAH... WE GOT THROUGH THE POLICE BARRICADE ON THE STEPS OF THE SUPREME COURT AND HAD A SYMBOLIC KISS-IN WITH ALL THESE WILD WOMEN!..."
EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW
"I WAS KISSING HARRIET WHEN THE ARRESTING OFFICERS PULLED US APART!"
CROSS
IT WAS SO... SUCH A REVOLUTIONARY GESTURE!
YEAH, I'LL BET!
IT'S JUST WONDERFUL TO HAVE SUCH AN EMPOWERED EMPLOYEE, MO. NOW YOU CAN START MAKING SOME REVOLUTIONARY GESTURES WITH THIS.


BUTT REACTION
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20
BRUNCHING AT CAFÉ TOPAZ, MO HAS SHOWN ABSOLUTELY NO INTEREST IN CLARICE AND TONI'S DISCUSSION ABOUT U.S. AID TO THE CONTRAS...
ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT, MO?
HUH? OH, YEAH. I'M FINE...
UH... SO, TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT HARRIET. IS SHE INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE?
MO, FER GODDESS' SAKE! YOU SPENT A NIGHT IN JAIL AND DROVE HALFWAY ACROSS THE COUNTRY WITH HER... SURELY YOU GOT BEYOND SMALL TALK!
WELL... IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE SHE HAS ANY PRIMARY-TYPE PERSON... SHE MENTIONED AN EX-LOVER, BUT SHE NEVER ACTUALLY SAID SHE WAS AVAILABLE!
I MEAN, WHAT IF I ASK HER ON A DATE DATE BUT SHE THINKS IT'S JUST A FRIENDLY DATE... WHAT IF I MAKE A FOOL OF MYSELF?!
MO, TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS! YOU'LL BE ABLE TO TELL IF SHE'S INTERESTED OR NOT!
BUT IT'S BEEN SO LONG! HOW DO I KNOW IF MY INSTINCTS ARE STILL WORKING?
OKAY, MO. AS A RULE, I DON'T LIKE PASSING ALONG THIS KIND OF INFORMATION, BUT I SEE YOU NEED SOME ENCOURAGEMENT. THE OTHER DAY HARRIET REMARKED TO ME THAT YOU HAVE, AH... I BELIEVE HER PHRASE WAS, 'A CUTE BUTT'.
WHAT?! SHE SAID WHAT? WHEN? WHY?!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE MEANT?
I KNEW I WOULD REGRET THAT.
INSTINCTS, MO. TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS.
LATER THAT DAY...
CUTE? CUTE LIKE KITTENS AND BABIES? CUTE LIKE NICE?... OR CUTE LIKE... HOT?!! I WONDER IF SHE LIKES ME?!



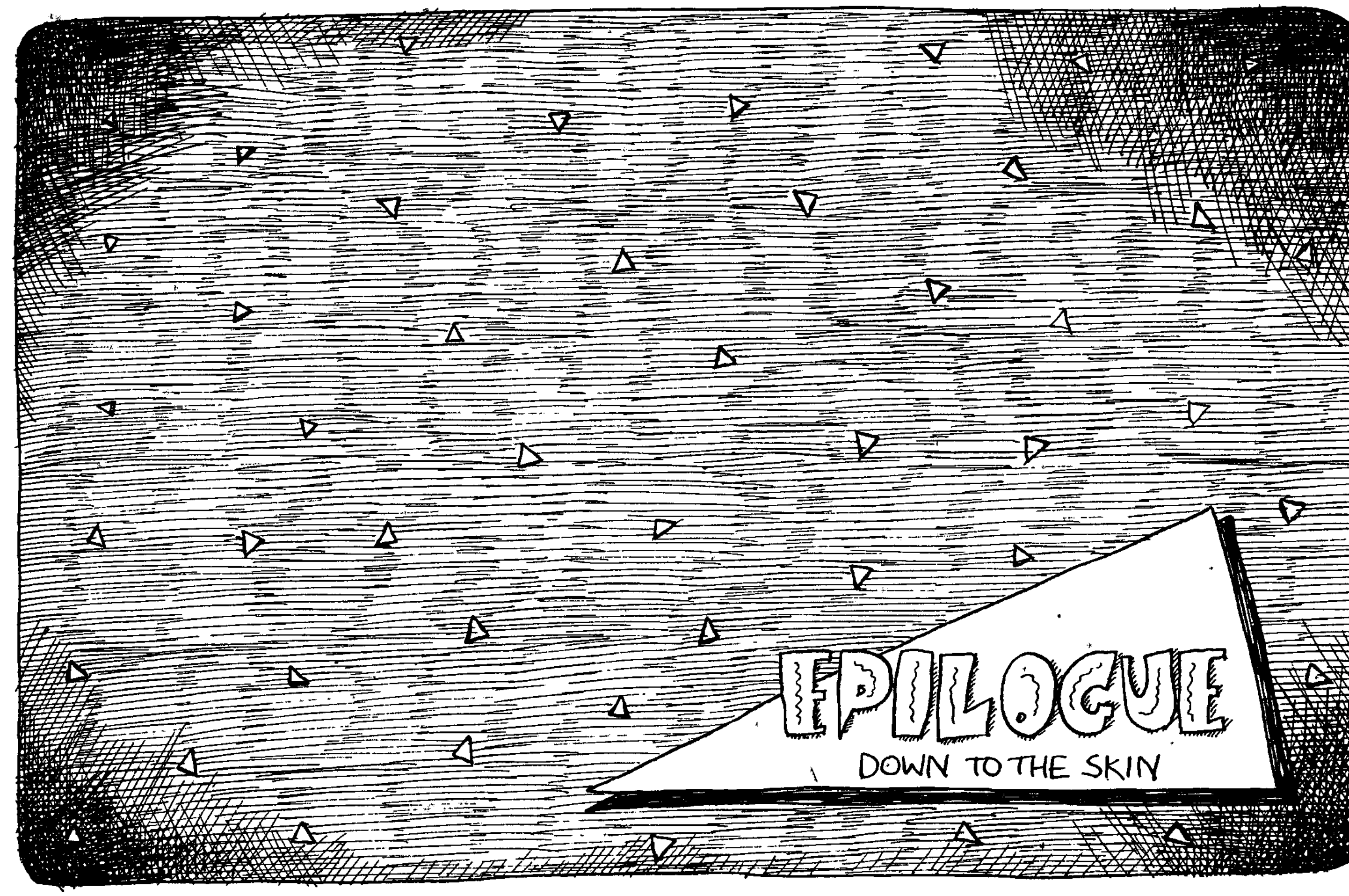
By The Book
21
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HARRIET, STILL IN PROFESSIONAL DRAG FROM HER JOB, DROPS BY MADWIMMIN BOOKS AFTER WORK ONE SNOWY EVENING.
I HOPE SHE'S WORKING TODAY! WHAT A DRAG IF I CAME OVER HERE FOR NOTHING...
OPEN
HEY, MO! HOW ARE YA? NICE TO SEE YOU!
HARRIET! HI! WHAT'S HAPPENING?
LESBIAN FICTIO
UM... I'M LOOKING FOR A COPY OF "THE WHEAT-FREE GUIDE TO CREATIVE VISUALIZATION IN CO-DEPENDENT PAST-LIFE RELATIONSHIPS."
HUH. JEEZ, I NEVER HEARD OF THAT ONE... WONDER IF IT'S IN SPIRITUALITY OR COOKING... WHO'S IT BY?
I DUNNO. I MADE IT UP. I REALLY JUST CAME BY TO SEE YOU.
PHEW! YOU HAD ME GOING THERE FOR A MINUTE! USUALLY I'VE AT LEAST HEARD OF A TITLE, EVEN IF WE DON'T STOCK IT.... WHA-AT?!
MOMENTARILY STUNNED, OUR HEROINE QUICKLY REGAINS HER COMPOSURE.
I SAID, I JUST CAME BY TO SEE YOU.
REALLY? UH... I MEAN, UM, WE'LL BE CLOSING IN A FEW MINUTES... ARE YOU HUNGRY? WE COULD, UM... HAVE DINNER?
GREAT! I'D LOVE TO... I'LL BROWSE AROUND TILL YOU'RE READY.
JEZANNA! THAT'S HER! THAT'S HARRIET! SHE CAME BY TO SEE ME! WE'RE GOING OUT TO DINNER!
HUH. SHE'S DRESSED LIKE THAT FOR DINNER WITH YOU?
AW, THOSE ARE JUST HER WORK CLOTHES. SHE INVESTIGATES HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS FOR THE STATE... ISN'T SHE GORGEOUS?
I'LL CLOSE OUT, MO. GO ENJOY YOUR BIG DATE.
THANKS, JEZ! SEE YOU TOMORROW!
SO, WHAT DO YOU FEEL LIKE? ETHIOPIAN? MEXICAN? MACROBIOTIC?
HOW ABOUT THE TOPAZ?
BUT OF COURSE! SHALL WE?



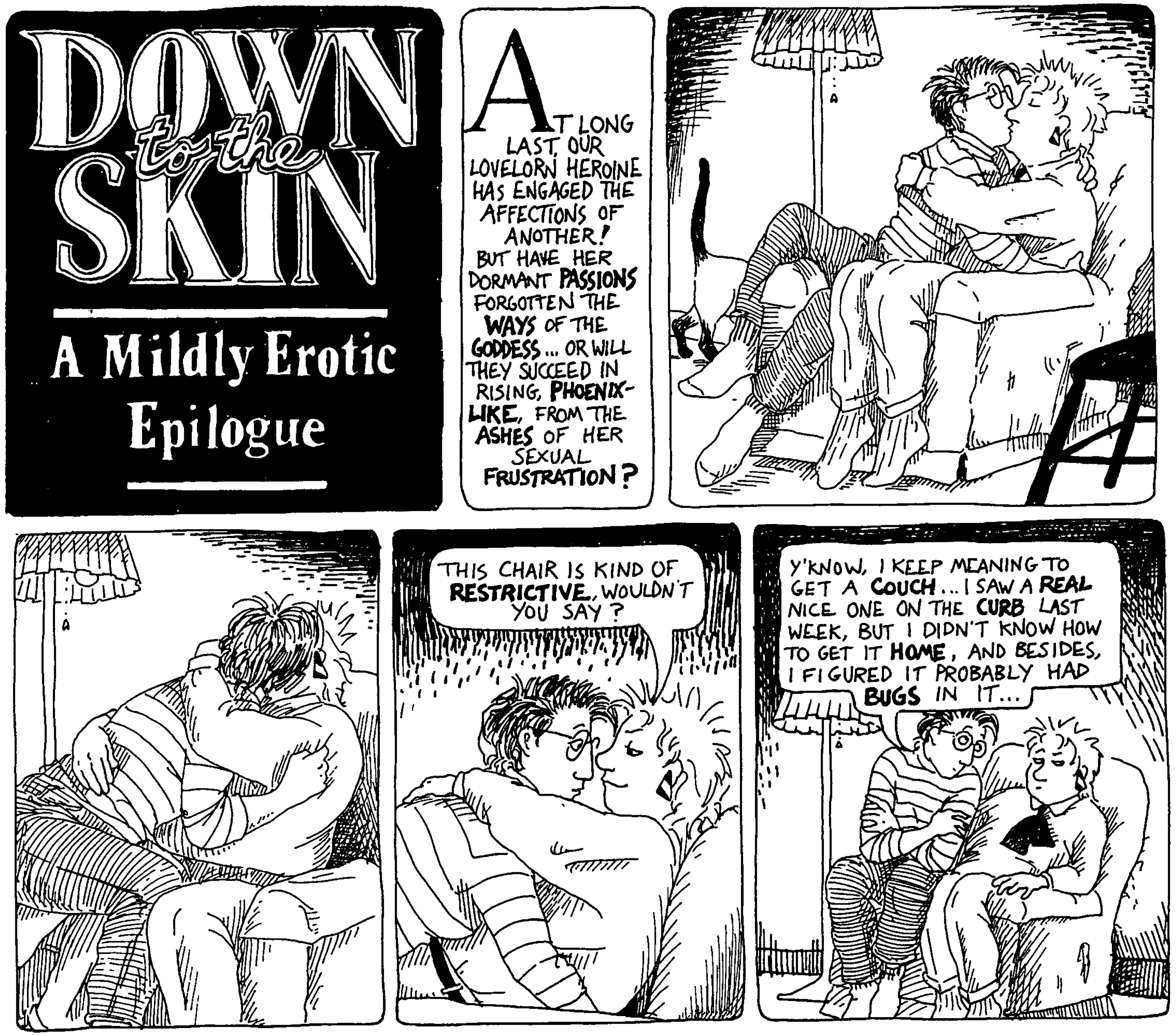
SUSPENSE
22
©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL
DINING AT CAFÉ TOPAZ, MO & HARRIET APPEAR TO HAVE FINALLY GOTTEN IT TOGETHER. BUT IS IT A DATE, OR IS IT JUST A FRIENDLY DINNER? ONLY MORE TIME WILL TELL...
THE AMBIENCE IS NOT EXACTLY INTIMATE...
I SWEAR EVERY DYKE I'VE EVER KNOWN IS HERE TONIGHT. HI, LIZA.
YEAH, JEEZ... ME TOO. HI NAOMI, GINGER.
MENU
NONETHELESS, THEY MANAGE TO SWAP COMING-OUT STORIES...
I THINK I FIRST REALLY KNEW WHEN I FELL IN LOVE WITH JULIE ANDREWS IN THE SOUND OF MUSIC. I WAS FOUR AT THE TIME...
AND RELATIONSHIP HISTORIES.
...YEAH, WE WERE TOGETHER FIVE YEARS, BUT WE HAD SEX I THINK TWICE DURING THE LAST THREE OF THEM.
EVENTUALLY THE CROWD GETS TO THEM.
HOW'S IT GOING, MO?
THEY DECIDE TO HAVE DESSERT AT A PLACE DOWN THE BLOCK.
IT'S REALLY SNOWING!
YOUR FEET MUST BE COLD.
THEY LINGER...
MORE TEA?
SURE.
SOMEHOW, EVENTUALLY, THEIR KNEES TOUCH.
SIGH!
GASP!
THEN SUDDENLY A STRANGE VOICE SPEAKS THROUGH MO'S BODY!
I... Y'KNOW, UM... I'M REALLY ATTRACTED TO YOU!
OMIGOD! WHO SAID THAT?!
A HORRIFYING SILENCE ENSUES. IS IT AN HOUR, OR MERELY SEVERAL SECONDS?
THUMP THUMPA THUMP
I'VE HAD A CRUSH ON YOU FOR MONTHS.
THANK GODDESS! I WAS ABOUT TO COMMIT HARA-KIRI WITH MY TEASPOON!

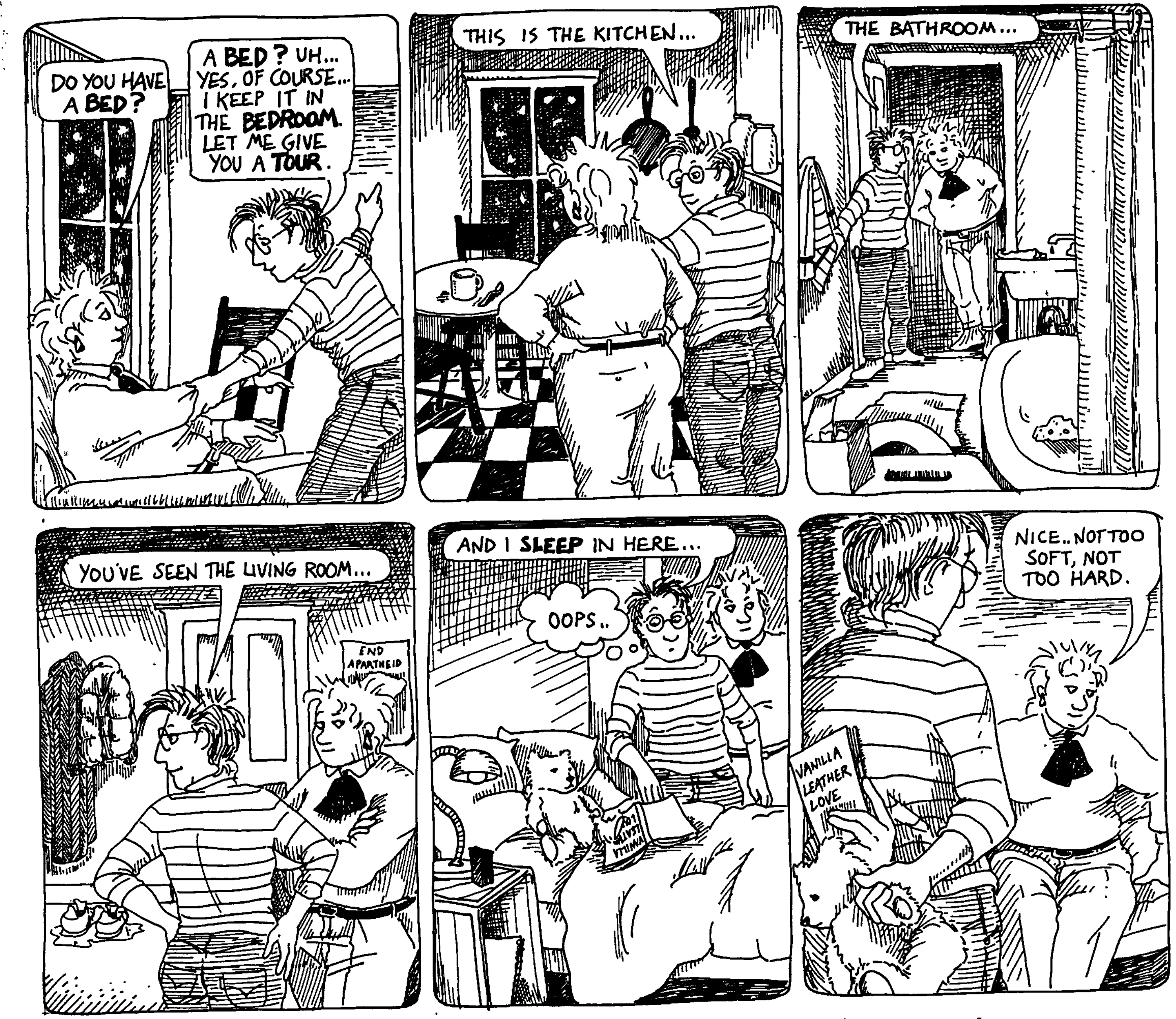


MODERN LOVE
23
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AFTER DECLARING THEIR MUTUAL ATTRACTION, OUR HEROINES RETURN TOGETHER TO MO'S APARTMENT UNDER THE PRETENSE OF WARMING HARRIET'S FEET.
HARRIET HAS JUST REFUSED MORE TEA.
UH.. LISTEN, HARRIET.. I HATE TO MAKE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON HERE... BUT IN THE EVENT THAT YOU AND I, Y'KNOW... AT SOME POINT, SAY, MAYBE GOT SEXUAL... HYPOTHETICALLY SPEAKING, OF COURSE... AH... I THINK WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND ALL, CONSIDERING AIDS AND EVERYTHING... Y'KNOW?
HUH! THAT WAS REALLY BRAVE OF YOU... I DIDN'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO BRING IT UP...
OKAY. SO, I'VE NEVER SLEPT WITH A MAN... NEVER DONE I.V. DRUGS,... NEVER HAD A BLOOD TRANSFUSION, ...BUT I DID ONCE HAVE A... UH... FLING WITH A WOMAN WHOSE HISTORY I WAS UNSURE OF...
A ONE-NIGHT STAND? A CHEAP, TAWDRY ENCOUNTER? YOU? MO, I'M SHOCKED!
I WAS YOUNG AND FOOLISH! IT WAS MY FIRST TIME IN A WOMEN'S BAR... I THOUGHT IT WAS REQUIRED BEHAVIOR! SHE SEDUCED ME AND I NEVER SAW HER AGAIN!
HOW BITTERSWEET. MO, RELAX! IT'S NO BIG DEAL!
BUT IT IS! I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HER! TECHNICALLY, THAT MAKES ME HIGH RISK!
LISTEN... EVEN KNOWING PEOPLE'S HISTORIES DOESN'T GUARANTEE ANYTHING... EVEN SUPPOSING YOU KNOW WHO ALL YOUR LOVERS' OTHER PARTNERS HAVE BEEN, HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO THEY'VE SLEPT WITH? OR WHO THEIR LOVERS HAVE SLEPT WITH?! IT'S PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE!
YEAH... JEEZ, Y'KNOW, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THERE'S NOTHING TO DO BUT CRAWL INTO A GIANT ZIP-LOCK BAGGIE AND RETIRE TO A CONVENT!
THAT'S NOT TRUE! YOU'RE SUCH AN ALARMIST! I CAN THINK OF LOTS OF THINGS WE COULD DO.
YEAH, RIGHT. LIKE HAVE SEX OVER THE TELEPHONE?
ACTUALLY, KISSING IS RELATIVELY LOW RISK...
WHAT? UH... I MEAN...
YOU'RE ADORABLE WHEN YOU PANIC.
I BET YOU SAY THAT TO ALL THE GIRLS.



EPILOGUE
DOWN TO THE SKIN


DOWN to the SKIN
A Mildly Erotic Epilogue
AT LONG LAST, OUR LOVELORN HEROINE HAS ENGAGED THE AFFECTIONS OF ANOTHER! BUT HAVE HER DORMANT PASSIONS FORGOTTEN THE WAYS OF THE GODDESS... OR WILL THEY SUCCEED IN RISING, PHOENIX-LIKE, FROM THE ASHES OF HER SEXUAL FRUSTRATION?
THIS CHAIR IS KIND OF RESTRICTIVE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
Y'KNOW, I KEEP MEANING TO GET A COUCH... I SAW A REAL NICE ONE ON THE CURB LAST WEEK, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO GET IT HOME, AND BESIDES, I FIGURED IT PROBABLY HAD BUGS IN IT...

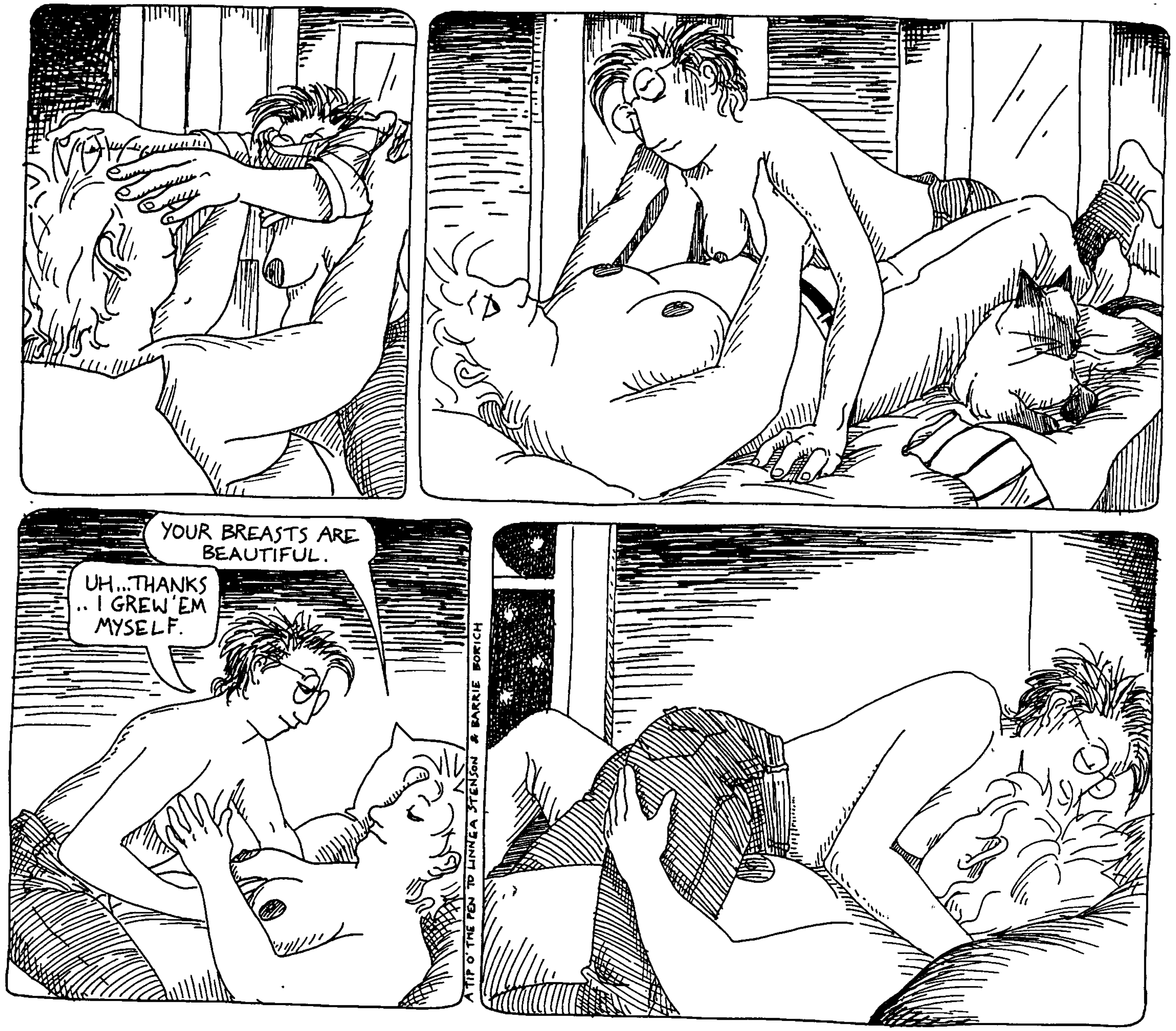

DO YOU HAVE A BED?
A BED? UH... YES, OF COURSE... I KEEP IT IN THE BEDROOM. LET ME GIVE YOU A TOUR.
THIS IS THE KITCHEN...
THE BATHROOM...
YOU'VE SEEN THE LIVING ROOM...
END APARTHEID
AND I SLEEP IN HERE...
OOPS..
NICE.. NOT TOO SOFT, NOT TOO HARD.
VANILLA LEATHER LOVE

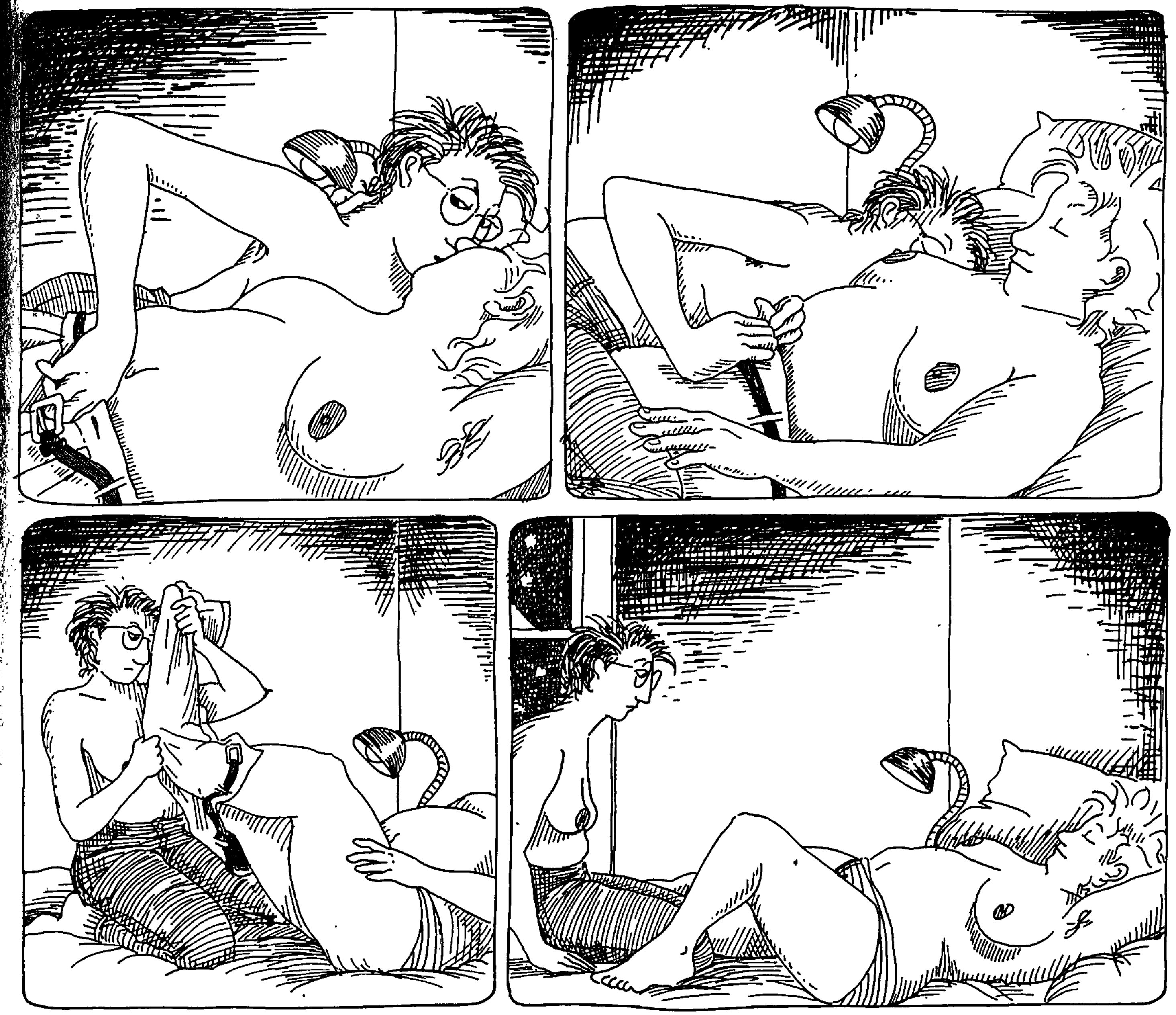

CARE TO JOIN ME?
UH.. LOOK, HARRIET.. I GOTTA WARN YOU. I HAVEN'T DONE THIS FOR A WHILE.. I THINK I MIGHT BE OUT OF PRACTICE.
DON'T WORRY. IT'S LIKE RIDING A BIKE. COME HERE.
MO, I KNOW YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT AIDS, BUT LISTEN. I HAVEN'T SLEPT WITH A BOY SINCE HIGH SCHOOL...

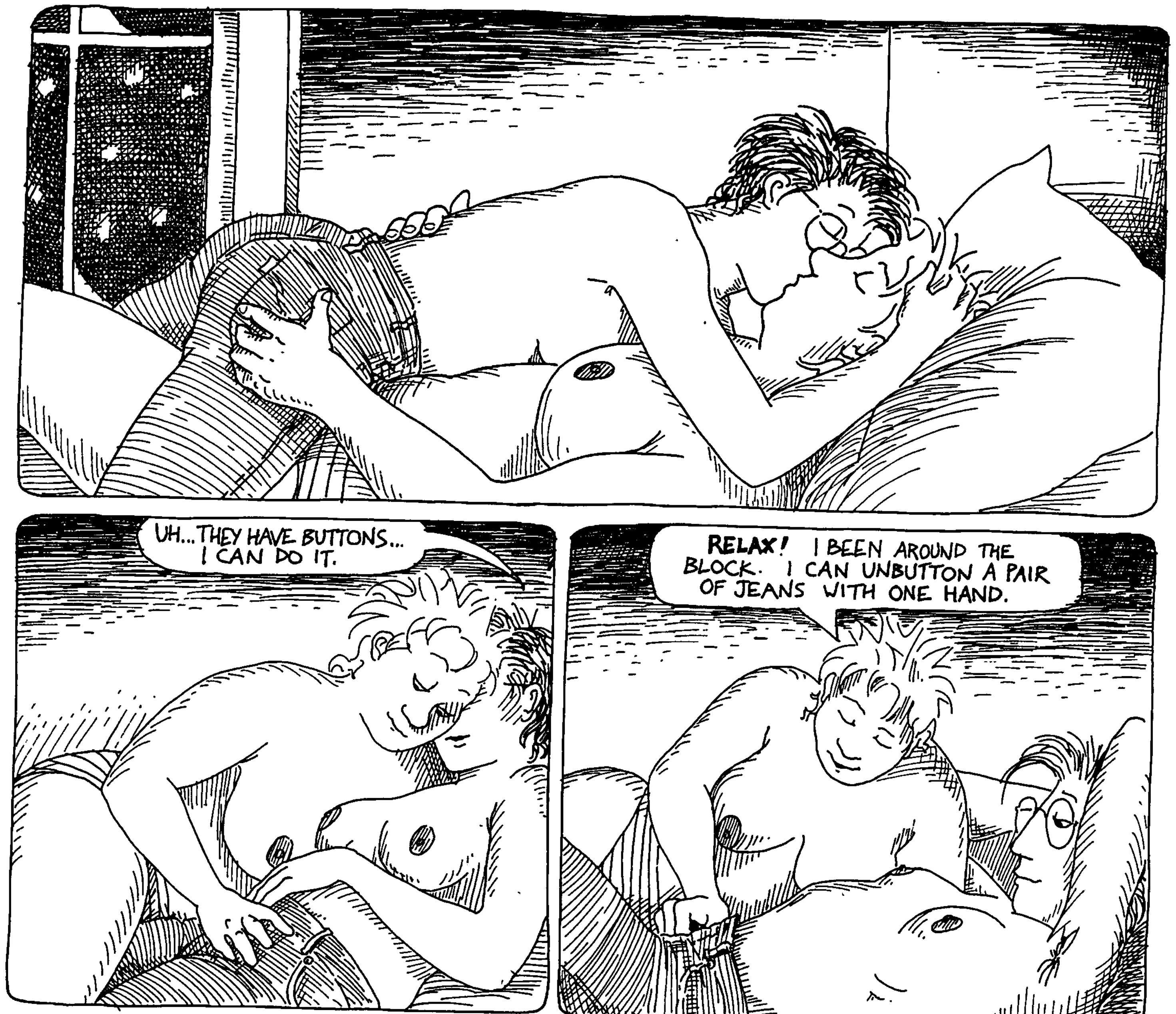

..AND I'VE NEVER DONE I.V. DRUGS OR HAD ANY KIND OF SEX WHERE BLOOD WAS EXCHANGED... BESIDES, WOMAN-TO-WOMAN TRANSMISSION IS REALLY RARE. WE'RE PROBABLY BOTH SAFE.
YEAH.. I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. I JUST TEND TO WORRY A LOT ABOUT THINGS, Y'KNOW?
OH, REALLY? I HADN'T NOTICED.
DO YOU NORMALLY WEAR YOUR GLASSES TO BED?
YES. UH,... I MEAN, NO.. BUT THEY MAKE ME FEEL MORE SECURE. I WANNA KEEP THEM ON FOR A WHILE.
WHATEVER ROLLS YOUR SOCKS DOWN. Y'KNOW, YOU HAVE NICE EYES UNDER THERE. I NEVER NOTICED.
I NOTICED. YOURS. THEY'RE, UH... BEAUTIFUL.

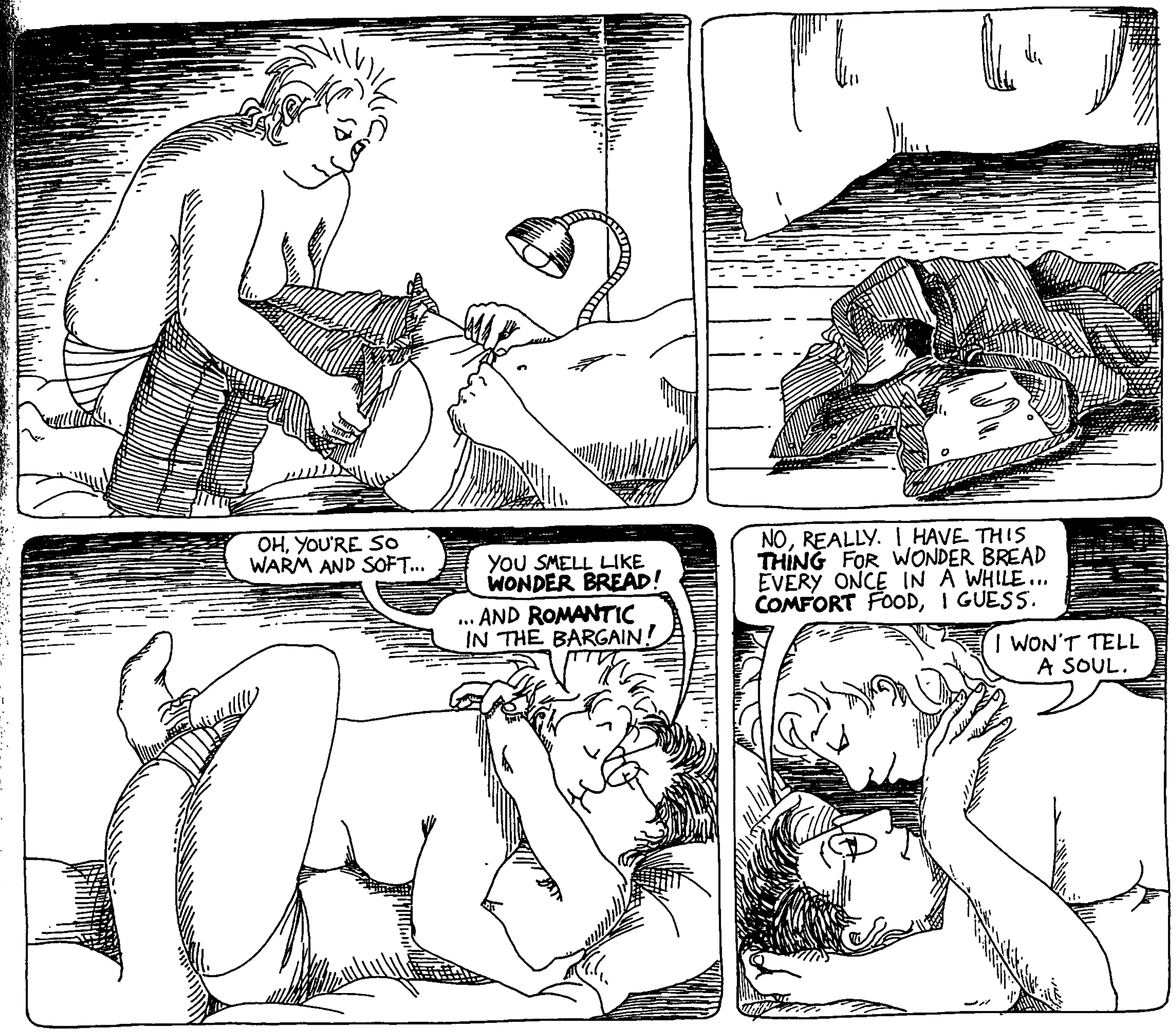

HARRIET...REMEMBER WHEN WE KISSED DURING THE DEMONSTRATION AT THE SUPREME COURT? I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA DIE.
OH, YEAH? COULD THAT HAVE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT A COP WAS DRAGGING YOU AWAY BY THE ANKLES?
NO! YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN...
YEAH, I'LL ADMIT IT WAS PRETTY EXCITING. I MUSTA KISSED THIRTY DYKES THAT DAY, BUT WHEN I FINALLY GOT TO YOU I WAS REALLY NERVOUS.
YEAH, RIGHT. IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT POLICEMAN IN THE RIOT HELMET?
NOTHING WHATSOEVER.

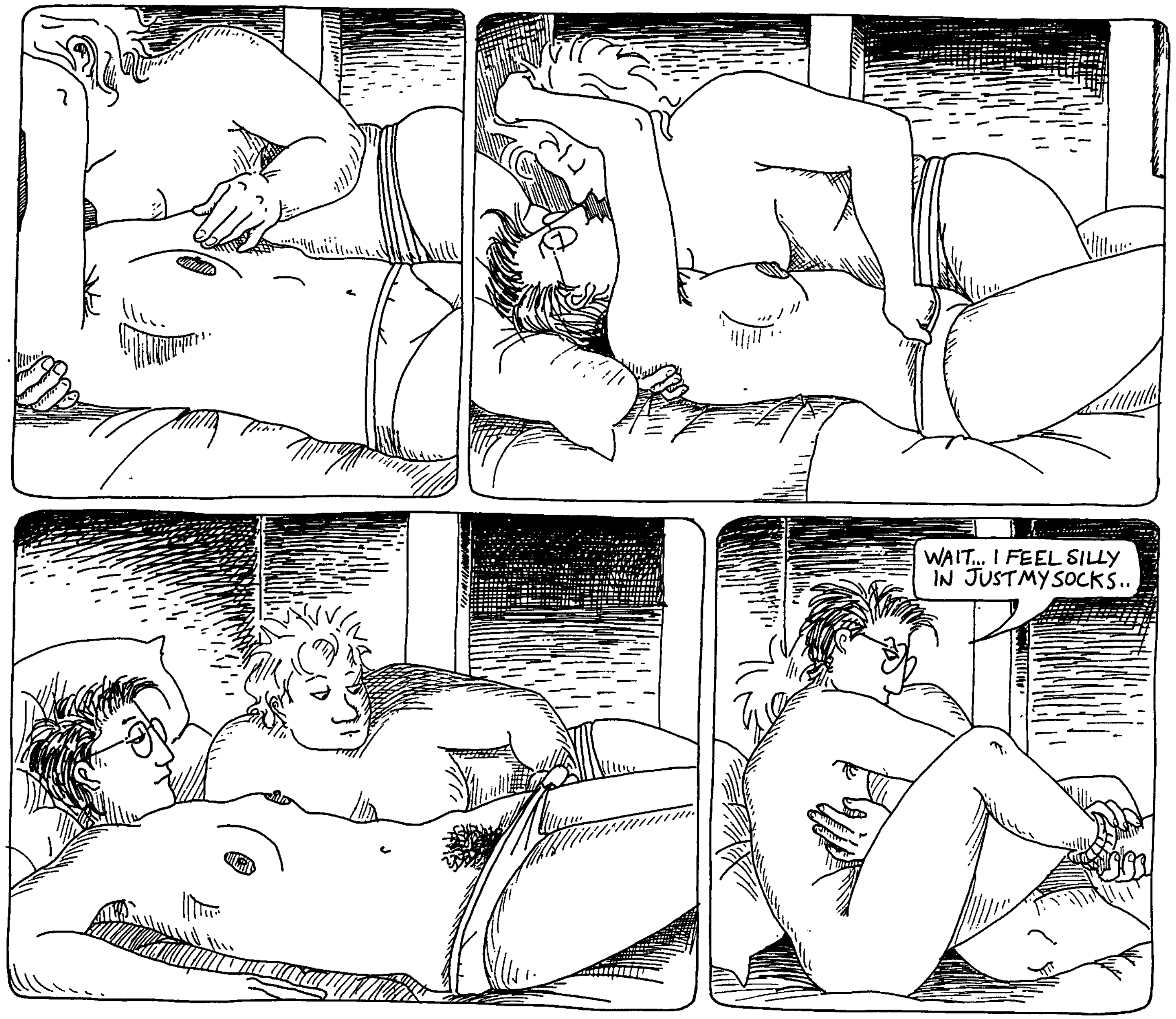

UH-OH! A BRA! HOPE I CAN REMEMBER HOW THESE THINGS WORK!
UH-OH! MY BRA! HOPE SHE DOESN'T THINK I'M UNCOOL!
WAIT...I'LL DO IT!
NO! I ALMOST HAVE IT!

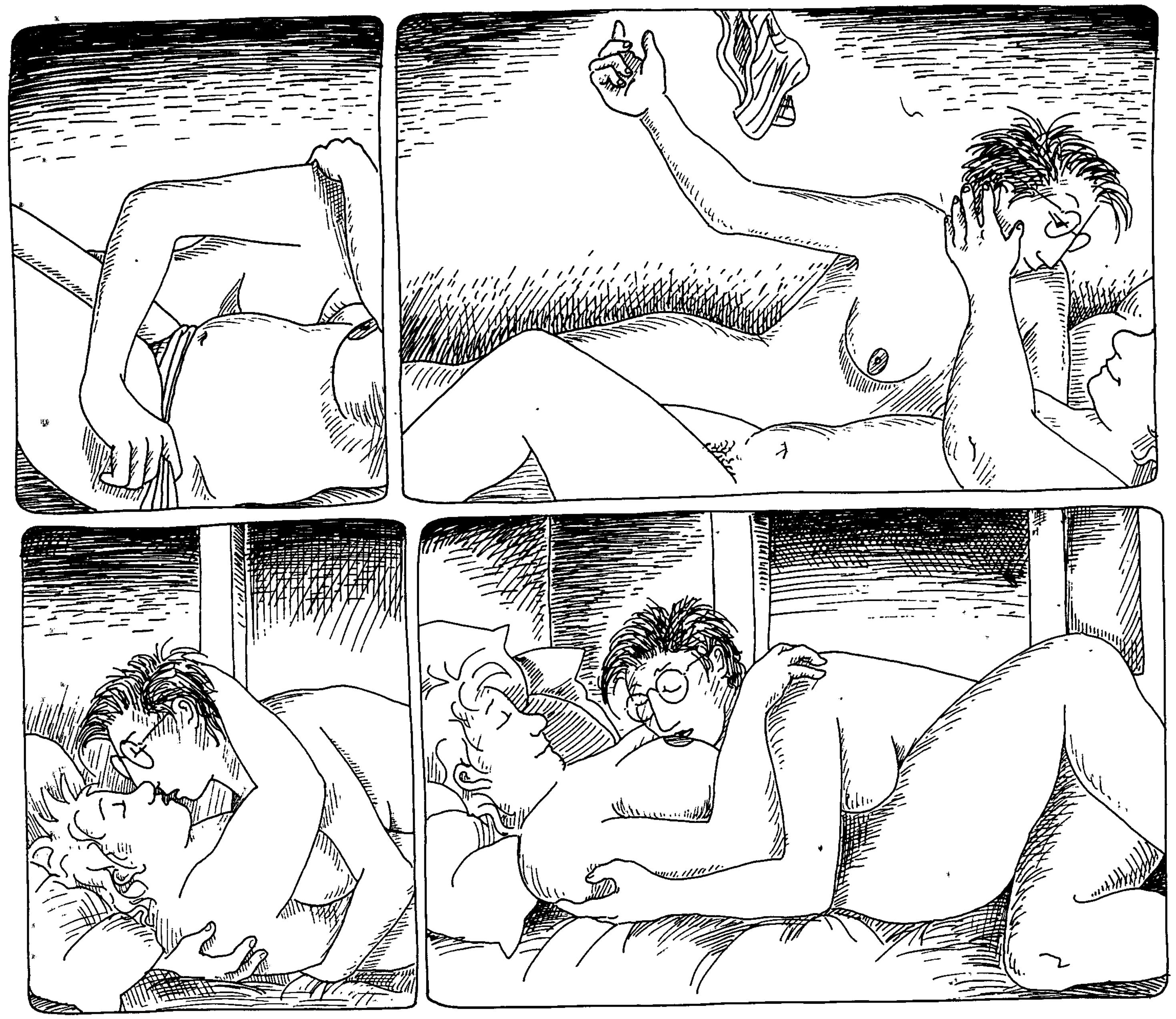

YOUR BREASTS ARE BEAUTIFUL.
UH...THANKS ..I GREW 'EM MYSELF.
A TIP O' THE PEN TO LINNEA STENSON & BARRIE BORICH

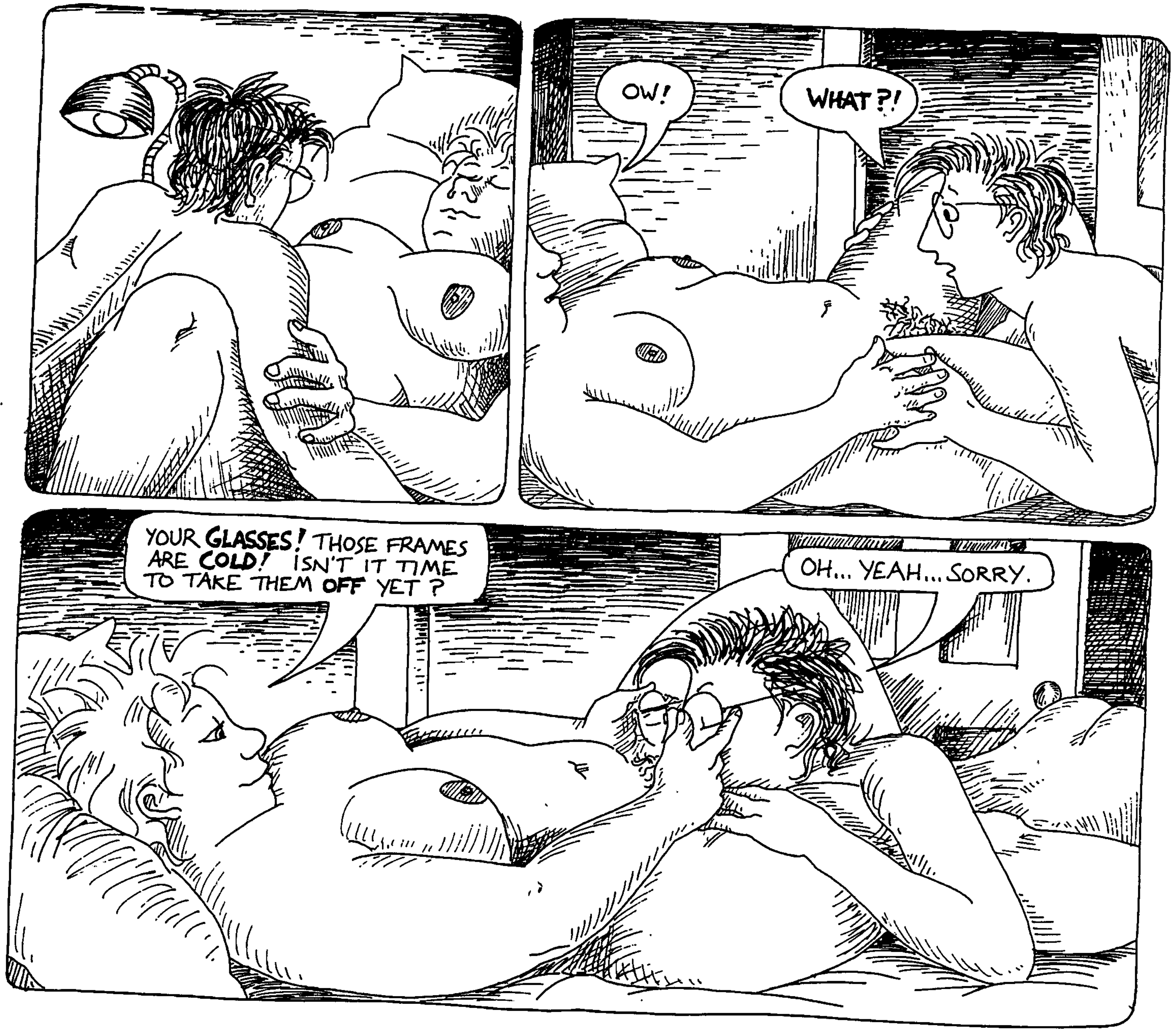


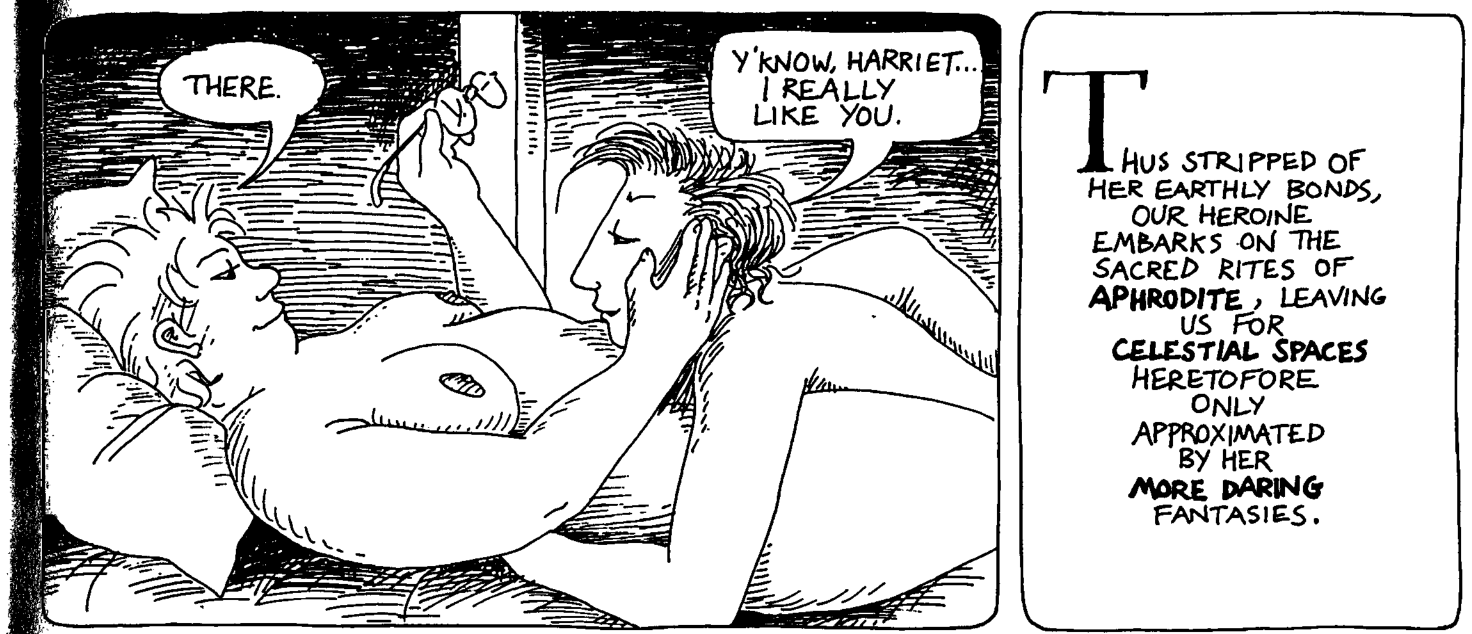

UH...THEY HAVE BUTTONS...
I CAN DO IT.
RELAX! I BEEN AROUND THE BLOCK. I CAN UNBUTTON A PAIR OF JEANS WITH ONE HAND.


OH, YOU'RE SO WARM AND SOFT...
YOU SMELL LIKE WONDER BREAD!
...AND ROMANTIC IN THE BARGAIN!
NO, REALLY. I HAVE THIS THING FOR WONDER BREAD EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE... COMFORT FOOD, I GUESS.
I WON'T TELL A SOUL.


WAIT... I FEEL SILLY IN JUST MY SOCKS..




OW!
WHAT?!
YOUR GLASSES! THOSE FRAMES ARE COLD! ISN'T IT TIME TO TAKE THEM OFF YET?
OH... YEAH... SORRY.


THERE.
Y'KNOW, HARRIET... I REALLY LIKE YOU.
THUS STRIPPED OF HER EARTHLY BONDS, OUR HEROINE EMBARKS ON THE SACRED RITES OF APHRODITE, LEAVING US FOR CELESTIAL SPACES HERETOFORE ONLY APPROXIMATED BY HER MORE DARING FANTASIES.